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CROSS-BENCH VIEWS OF CURRENT CHURCH QUESTIONS

BY

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PREFACE

In this volume I have brought together some occasional writings which have reference to matters of permanent interest, and, at this time, of urgent importance. The candid reader will make due allowance for the circumstances under which these writings were, in the first instance, composed. He will also, perhaps, remember that the avowed object of most of these pieces was less the advocacy of specific views than the setting forward of considerations apt to escape the notice of advocates. It has long been my practice, which is not without the support of great examples, to consider even matters, upon which necessarily I feel very strongly, as "open questions," to set down accordingly the pros and cons of any suggested course, and to discuss, as from outside, the proposals, with which, it might be thought, I was, personally or professionally, bound to sympathise and agree. The "cross-bench" habit of mind, which this practice reveals and strengthens, is, I know, very perplexing to most people, and highly exasperating to many, but it has, I believe, sufficient justifications, and, in the present state of political and religious opinion, no slight value.

On one practical question it will be evident that I hold a very strong conviction. Recent events have strengthened my belief in the worth of an Established Church as such. I am well aware, of course, that a large, and it may be an increasing, body of opinion, mainly, but by no means exclusively, Nonconformist, is adverse to the Establishment on religious grounds. From that body of opinion I respectfully

but decisively dissent. If the Establishment of the historic Church of England inflict any civic hardship on any citizen, let that hardship be indicated and proved, and I for one will cheerfully support its removal. Nay more, I would go far in that policy of establishing the non-episcopal Churches, which has already been accepted by the Legislature. It is the merest delusion to attribute to the Establishment that sectarian bitterness which so miserably distinguishes our national religion, and works such lamentable consequences in our national life. The same bitterness is found elsewhere—in Ireland, in Australia, in South Africa—where there is no Established Church. Its cause lies deeper, and I have not hesitated to point out the direction in which I think it is to be found.

Practically disestablishment means little else than disendowment; and *that* is a project with which I can make no terms. It implies a great weakening of the material resources of religion at a time when, by universal admission, those resources are utterly insufficient. I can understand, and, up to a point, sympathise with, a policy of "concurrent endowment," though, under all the circumstances, I do not see that it would benefit the community, but the policy of "disendowment" seems to me essentially irreligious, and, therefore, ultimately ruinous to the best interests of the nation. At all hazards the religious endowments of the English people must be respected. Rearrange their distribution if you will, revise the conditions of their tenure, take better securities, if you can, for their honest use as religious endowments: in all this I am with you, but do not ask me to join in a project of confiscation, which I abhor in any application, and most of all where the ultimate victim is no individual, or class, or trade, but the Nation itself in its highest and most unprotected interests.

Cui bono? was issued as a pamphlet, and had a considerable circulation. It has been for some while out of print, and in republishing it now, I yield to many requests.

The two lectures on "Dissent in England" were originally delivered in the Chapel of S. Mary's Hospital, Ilford. They were printed for private circulation among the members of the Chapel congregation and other personal friends, and have been so very kindly received that it seemed worth while to give them a wider publicity. I have to thank Mr. John Murray for his kindness in permitting me to reprint from the *Quarterly Review* an article on Bishop French; Mr. L. J. Maxse, for similar permission with respect to articles on "The British Sunday," "Foreign Missions," "The Confessional in the English Church," and "The Mivart Episode," which appeared in the *National Review* during the years 1897–1900; to Mr. Percy W. Bunting, for allowing me to include in this volume the article, "Our unhappy Divisions," which appeared in the *Contemporary Review* in December 1901, and has been the subject of much comment and criticism.

The papers on "Church Reform" and "The Chinese Puzzle of Missions," and the two Essays on "The Influence of Critical Theory on the Interpretation and Authority of Holy Scripture" and "The History of the Pastoral Ideal in the English Church since the Reformation," have not been previously published. As an appendix to the last-named essay, I added the paper on "Sermons," read to the Brighton Church Congress.

H. H. H.

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CROSS-BENCH VIEWS OF CURRENT CHURCH QUESTIONS

CHURCH REFORM.—I

Speech at the S. Alban's Diocesan Conference at Bishop's Stortford, 2nd November 1897, *on the Resolution* :—

"That in the interest of the Church of England as a Spiritual Society, the grave abuses of its National Establishment ought to be promptly and thoroughly reformed; and that the cessation from the Disestablishment conflict ought to be utilised in order to point the attention of the devout laity to the subject of Church Reform, to quicken the public conscience, and to inform the public mind, with a view to preparing the way for cautious and thorough legislation."

THE resolution which stands in my name on the agenda of the Conference indicates by its length and caution the perplexity of my mind; and, perhaps, the inherent difficulty of my subject. I shall confine myself to the four leading propositions involved in my motion.

1. That there are grave abuses of the National Establishment which impede the spiritual work of the Church.

2. That the present interval of political quietude presents a favourable opportunity for considering those abuses.

3. That the devout laity need rousing.

4. That Parliament must, in the future as in the past, be the principal instrument of Church Reform.

Of these four propositions, the first three I shall deal

with very summarily, in order to devote a larger proportion of my allotted time to the last, in which I perceive myself to come into sharp collision with the Church Reform League.

1. The existence of grave abuses is admitted on all hands. The grotesque methods by which clergymen are appointed to the cure of souls, the amazing conditions under which they hold their cures, the unparalleled anomaly of a freehold in spiritual charge, these, conveniently summed up in the formula "our system of patronage," constitute, from a spiritual standpoint, abuses so grave and so manifest, that their existence for an hour is matter of wonder. The "Patronage system" and the "Freehold Benefice" would seem a machinery for multiplying scandals and stereotyping incompetence. That the system works without intolerable results must be admitted. Public opinion is a powerful corrective; there is a high, and, I think, a rising standard of clerical responsibility; the English mind is naturally indifferent to anomalies, provided only that their practical inconvenience be not too apparent. The system has grown up with us, the abuses have for the most part respectable ancestry, and we are wisely reluctant to quarrel with arrangements which have a distant origin, which have served useful ends, and which are not yet wholly unserviceable. Finally, we live at the close of a century of unparalleled reforming activity, and our experiences do not precisely stir us to any great ardour for fresh reforming projects. We would—it may be base, but sure 'tis not unnatural—

> "rather bear those ills we have,
> Than fly to others that we know not of."

Nevertheless, there is a consensus of opinion as to the spiritual mischiefs resulting from ecclesiastical abuses, and I shall assume that none here dispute the fact.

2. The rout of the Liberationists has given us a quiet time, and, as far as we can foresee, the quiet time may last for some years. This, then, surely provides the very opportunity we need for approaching questions which beyond all others are unsuited for discussion in times of eager political conflict. Church questions are not at this moment in the forefront of politics; our adversaries are too

depressed, and we are too satisfied to resume fight over the old Disestablishment issue. We may with comparative detachment of mind turn our thoughts to those weak points in our own case which we could hardly be expected to consider, or even admit, when we "*spake with the enemy in the gate.*" Moreover, we should gravely mistake the significance of the great electoral triumph of 1895, if we supposed that it argued any general acquiescence in existing abuses. Many voters resisted Disestablishment in order—so they did not scruple to express it—to give Churchmen time to set their house in order. It was a reprieve, not an acquittal. Therefore I hope to carry you with me in my contention, that we have now a favourable opportunity for Church Reform of which we ought to make prompt and effectual use.

3. The first step must be to rouse the devout laity to the gravity of the issues at stake, and the need of immediate action. The devout laity may be arranged in three divisions. There are, first, those who call themselves, and are commonly called by others, "good Churchmen." They are the backbone of "Church Defence" in the constituencies, and the conscience of the Conservative Party. They are accustomed to associate projects of Church Reform with hostility to the Church; they are, by disposition and habit, averse to change; and their respect for property has, under the stimulus of recent political experience, become almost fanatical. There is, next, a considerable body of very good men to whom all secular interference with ecclesiastical affairs has an unwelcome and even a sacrilegious aspect. To amalgamate parishes, or to pull down useless churches, or to simplify ecclesiastical law, seems to menace religion. Their pious timidity has become morbid. Finally, there is a certain number of Churchmen whose attitude is dictated by congregational or parochial selfishness. The present state of affairs suits them admirably; and, so long as that is the case, they will maintain its general excellence. Until the devout laity can be induced to take the advocacy of Church Reform out of the hands of politicians who have their own axe to grind in the process, that advocacy cannot but remain sterile at best, at worst it may be even destructive.

It is, I think, evident that the devout laity are strangely

patient of ecclesiastical abuses. The religious revival associated with "the Oxford Movement" has not tended to develope in Churchmen a strong sense of individual responsibility. For quite intelligible reasons its influence has been in the opposite direction. An insistence on the rights of the laity to a voice in the government of the Church has been associated with the persecuting fanaticism of dispiritualised Protestantism, or with the political interest of anti-Church partisans, and has been thus fatally prejudiced in the minds of our best laymen. Yet it is plain that unless the movement for Church Reform is seriously taken up by the devout laity, it will either fail altogether, or it will secure a success which may be worse than failure.

But we must go one step further. This acquiescence in abuses, which marks our laity, is itself a very grievous scandal, and a source of great spiritual weakness. Our Anglican habit of tolerating anything that works tolerably, may lead us into very serious sin. An arrangement which is wrong in principle may not discover its character by manifest enormities which shock men into revolt, but it will inevitably have an enfeebling effect on the whole system of which it forms part. Let me give you two examples. That clergymen who have bought their livings, or married themselves into their livings, or been arbitrarily introduced into their livings in defiance of the plainest considerations of equity and religion—and all these contingencies are common among us — should turn out very frequently eminently respectable parsons, who do not occasion any known or punishable scandal, does by no means show that the evil manner of their entrance into their benefices has not worked balefully in their parishes. I suppose the really serious defect of the clergy of England is not—and probably has never been—coarse vice, or even marked dereliction of formal duty, but simply lack of spiritual grip. Throughout the country, in parish after parish, the clergyman is respectable, and, so far as the legal requirements of his office are concerned, exemplary; but he is the last person in the world to whom a troubled conscience would unburden itself, or from whom the message of God would reach a sinner. In the view of his parishioners he lies outside the spiritual sphere;

part of the hierarchic order of village life, personally popular not rarely, but as a power of God in the place, as the messenger of Eternity, simply inconceivable. What is the explanation of all this? Is it not in many cases the petrifying consciousness in the clergyman's own mind that he has no right to be where he is; that, in view of the circumstances under which he entered on his benefice, it would be an intolerable hyprocrisy for him to pose as a "man sent by God" to the parish; that, in fact, whenever he comes into contact with spiritual needs he is stricken with the paralysis of self-contempt. The better the man, the more keenly does he feel the stain and burden of the fraud by which he inaugurated his ministry.

Once more; the practical absence of any discipline for the laity does not often occasion gross and manifest scandal. The advantages of such hypocrisy are too slight, or the restraints of public opinion are too powerful. Is it therefore to be concluded that our undisciplined condition works no serious mischief? What is one of the most serious difficulties with which the parish priest has to contend, when he sets himself to induce among his parishioners a devout and regular use of the Means of Grace? Is it not the strong tradition in the minds of the people which dissociates the Sacraments from any deep spiritual significance? Perhaps it is the penalty which the Church of England must pay for the horrible profanities, required by the Test Act, in which for so long the Church not only acquiesced, but recognised the palladium of her National Establishment. The Holy Communion has been almost irrecoverably degraded; and now, as we painfully strive to bring our people to regard it as the very central element of Christian worship and the normal sustenance of the Christian life, we find our labours defeated by obstinate prejudices and misconceptions. It may be a fine thing to vaunt on the political platform the all-embracing charity of the National Church, which insists on no conditions in the candidate for baptism, and asks no questions of the communicant; which accepts all and banishes none; which with impartial benevolence bestows her blessing on the unbelieving and the profane, and utters her spiritual consolations over the scandalous and disobedient; but there is another side

to such charity, and one less pleasing to contemplate. We ourselves build up in the general mind that contempt for Sacraments and Ordinances which we lament.

Therefore let us be on our guard against the defects of our virtues. This Anglican habit of tolerating the tolerable must be conditioned by the limitation, provided always that the tolerable be not in principle wrong. If but that limitation be accepted, I do not think the devout laity will long continue to present to the Christian world the astonishing spectacle of genuine devotion acquiescent in admitted ecclesiastical abuses.

The devout laity must be roused to the gravity of the abuses in which they too readily acquiesce. Let us not pass from this conclusion without realising its significance for the clergy. We must count the cost of such rousing of the laity. It is manifestly impossible for us to cling to our indefensible autocracy while we chide their unwarrantable indifference. We cannot restrict their responsibility by our convenience. Not the least considerable abuse of our National Establishment is the present ritual anarchy, itself the reflection of our parochial autocracy. Before all things, a National Establishment ought to secure to the citizens a conduct of public worship in accordance with the national mind. If the national mind is set on objects inconsistent with Christianity, then the hour for Disestablishment has struck; but until that is the case,—and no one has suggested that such is the case in England,—then the conduct of public worship ought to reflect the national mind. The national mind can only be expressed in the national legislation, and the Prayer-Book is in this connection the expression of the national mind. I am fully aware of all that is said about the difficulties of understanding the Prayer-Book Rubrics, and the impossibility of an exact fidelity to the Prayer-Book system. I do not think there is any practical difficulty, which is urged as an excuse for making light of the legal authority of the Prayer-Book, which I did not have to face myself as a parish priest. With that knowledge in my mind, and with that experience fresh in my memory, I do not hesitate to say that the line in England to-day falls sharply and decisively between the clergy who honourably endeavour to carry out

loyally the Prayer-Book system and those who are essentially disloyal to that system. The variety of ritual in the urban centres is bewildering; to some extent, I suppose, such variety must be accepted as the inevitable result of our social development, and so far, I think, it cannot be reasonably resented; but this explanation falls far short of the facts. I see no reason whatever for thinking that the nation is dissatisfied with the Prayer-Book system, allowance being made for the necessary adaptations of sixteenth century Rubrics to nineteenth century parishes; but I do see on all hands a growing impatience with the existing clerical autocracy, and that impatience commands my entire sympathy. It must be one of two things. If the parishioners are to have no check on the ritual vagaries of their parson, then both he and they must yield to an outside, superior authority. If that authority—in this case the Prayer-Book—is to be laid aside, then the natural rights of a Christian congregation must again revive to chasten the individualism of the clergy. I have said this, because I think there are signs that some at least of the clerical advocates of Church Reform have a very inadequate sense of the practical consequences of the agitation they are setting in motion.

4. I pass to my final proposition, namely, "That Parliament must, in the future as in the past, be the principal instrument of Church Reform." I observe that the Church Reform League bases much on the alleged incompetence of Parliament. To quote the Secretary, Rev. Lucius Fry, in a letter, apparently official, addressed to the London clergy last April—

"Experience has proved that, even under the most favourable circumstances, it is now practically impossible (even if it were desirable) for Parliament to 'reform and cleanse' the Church; and, therefore, instead of any longer wasting time and energy in fruitlessly trying to pass a series of ecclesiastical Bills through Parliament, a large body of us have banded ourselves together in order to try and get one short Enabling Act passed which will make it possible for the Church at any time, through her properly constituted and representative assemblies, subject only to the supremacy of the Crown and the veto of Parliament, to effect all necessary reforms herself."

The League has drafted a Bill designed to secure for "reformed Convocations in conjunction with such Houses of Laymen, legislative freedom and authority, exercised, as hereinafter described, in all matters of discipline, organisation, administration, and worship in the said Church."

Convocation, it seems to me, can never, under the conditions of modern life, be equal to so great a task. Even when reformed (and the reformation of Convocation is on all hands allowed to be the indispensable preliminary to any exercise of real power), Convocation can but represent the clergy; and the clergy are, numerically, too insignificant a body to command the respect of the nation for their decision on any matter of general interest. The Church Reform League is accustomed to appeal to the Constitution. The members of that Society seem to think that mediæval and Tudor precedents can determine the practice of the modern State. They have failed to appreciate the nature of the Constitution.

The Constitution of Great Britain cannot be found in the past, but in the present; not what was, but what is, marks the constitutional as distinguished from the merely legal. It is as futile to claim for the Church, in the name of the Constitution, the powers long abrogated by disuse, as to claim for the Crown the exercise of prerogatives which have for generations been tacitly abandoned. Moreover, the changed conditions of the national life must be reckoned with. The clergy are almost a stationary body in point of numbers. The nation is always advancing. Is it reasonable to suppose that 22,000 clergymen can ever be permitted to take over the ecclesiastical government of a nation of thirty million souls?

The Houses of Laymen may be dismissed from our consideration until some agreement has been reached as to the constituencies, by which the members are to be elected. Personally, I think the difficulty of the franchise insurmountable so long as the Church is established.

Moreover, I would ask those who are so eagerly demanding a large increase of the power of Convocation, to seriously reflect on the possible dangers which might attend their success. Looking back over the history of the last three hundred and

fifty years, or, if you will, confining yourself to the last half-century, and considering the behaviour of Convocation, what thoughtful Churchman could wish that that assembly had possessed real power? By its constitution, and under the conditions of a Church so deeply divided on matters of fundamental importance, Convocation, through no fault of its own, is inherently unfit for the exercise of judicial and legislative functions. Therefore I, for one, do not trust Convocation; not because I ignore the high intellectual level of its debates, or undervalue the considerable services which in other directions it is capable of rendering, but because, in my judgment, the verdict of History is decisively adverse to the policy of allowing to purely clerical assemblies any large measure of authority. Frankly, I think the broad interests of religion are safer in the hands of Parliament, acting always under the vigilant scrutiny of the Church, and subject to the restraints of public opinion.

This, however, is a personal opinion, and need not be considered. What must be considered is the essential unreasonableness of asking Parliament to delegate to any body whatsoever, powers so extensive as those which the work of Church Reform demands. Convocation may possibly be trusted with the settlement of small matters of ritual and, within certain limits, of organisation, but these do not touch the fringe of the abuses which afflict the Church. For the reform of the Patronage system, for the destruction of the freehold in the benefice, for the simplification of disciplinary procedure, for the amalgamation of many hundreds of country benefices too small to provide work, and too poor to provide pay, for separate incumbents, one only authority will suffice, and that is, the authority of Parliament.

Nor do I share the indignation of the Church Reform League at the slowness of parliamentary action. No delay can be so disastrous as crude, ill-considered legislation, representing the ardour of reforming zealots rather than the deliberate will of the nation. Abuses have grown slowly; they cannot be abolished quickly. It is far better to keep legislation and the public conscience together, so that your laws may be ensured an honest and thorough obedience, than to secure an ideal completeness in the Statutes at the cost of

a large disloyalty in actual practice. In the last analysis no legislation can do more than remove obstacles in the way of real reformation. The machinery provided for us by law, whether it be suitable and sufficient or obsolete and inadequate, must be worked; and its actual results will depend on the spirit and skill of the working. If it be true that the clergy are secular-minded and ill-educated, then your reforms are labour thrown away. If a more genuine spirit of detachment were ours, a more courageous independence, a more robust intelligence, a higher standard of work and life, we could afford to await with patience the gradual reformation of our ecclesiastical system. I think the Church Reform League does not sufficiently remember this, and therefore, while I think that indirectly the agitation for Church Reform may be fruitful of good result, I regard with considerable misgiving the avowed policy of the League.

CHURCH REFORM.—II

[1898]

CHURCH Reform is now the formula of a considerable party, and the avowed object of an eager political agitation. In this paper it is proposed to consider the subject not from the standpoint of the zealot for ecclesiastical independence, nor from that of the "democratic" Churchman, still less from that of the opponent of the existing relations of Church and State in this country, but solely from that detached and commonly disregarded standpoint of the average citizen, to whom the Church of England is the oldest and one of the most important of the national institutions, the good working of which is a matter of grave and solemn importance to the national welfare. It is proposed, first, to show cause for regarding with large misgiving the present agitation, and then to justify an earnest insistence on certain prompt and effective reforms through the action of Parliament.

I

The reforming agitation now in progress includes three distinct elements; which may be designated severally, the clerical, the democratic, and the practical. The cry for "self-government" has powerfully affected the imagination of the "Catholic" clergy. To them the "State" is the natural enemy of the Church. So sharply do they distinguish between the "spiritual" and the "secular" spheres, that they would repudiate with abhorrence the reforms they clamour for, if the agent by which those reforms were secured should be "Parliament." The "Church" is, with these enthusiasts, less a Divine Society than a supernatural corporation, tracing its authority and its government in an unbroken line from

the Apostles, miraculously exempt from the disintegrating influences of time, presenting in the world to-day, after the vicissitudes of two millenniums, the same external aspect, and advancing the same claims, as at the first when angels brought deliverance to the saints, and miracle was the vesture of life. Of course the verdict of history is decisively adverse to this conception of the Christian Society; but the ardour of faith is superior to the testimonies of prosaic fact. Church history is idealised to match the exigencies of the theory. The perfect model of faith and worship is pieced together by the inventive ingenuity of enthusiasm out of elements the most various imaginable, and located somewhere in the distant past—the Apostolic age, or the "primitive" centuries, or the "ages of Faith." The proposal of "self-government" commends itself as the restoration to the Spiritual Society of inherent rights, of which, by successive encroachments, it has been robbed by the aggressive hostility of the State. It is the necessity of the clerical attitude to identify the Church with the clergy; only on that assumption can the normal conflict between Church and State be plausibly exhibited. In deference to modern sentiment, the naked clericalism of the Middle Ages is screened by vague references to the "laity"; but, when practical proposals are reached, the law of the position asserts itself, and the share of the laity in the government of the Church is restricted to the privilege of making representations which the clergy may overrule, and subscribing funds which the clergy may expend. Bishop Anson may be accepted as a moderate exponent of the clerical view. He admits that self-government must involve the admission of the laity to some share in the control of Church affairs; but he obviously yields the point with reluctance. He adduces evidence from Scripture and antiquity to make clear that the laity have no tittle of right to any such position, and will only concede it as an act of grace on the part of the bishops who, "as the successors of the Apostles, the Divinely-appointed *rulers* of the Church," must surely have power to "call to their counsel . . . representatives of the faithful laity." It is, however, not easy to see how much result could come from the action of the laity under the conditions which the bishop would insist upon—

"But if this is the principle on which laity are to be admitted to an active share in consultation on the affairs of the Church, and it seems to me to be a basis on which those who do not consider it in accordance with precedent might consent to agree to, it is obvious that not only must the power of veto be reserved for the bishops on account of their supreme authority and responsibility, of which they cannot divest themselves, but they must have also the power of *initiative*, at least in all matters that concern what may be called the inner life of the Church, its doctrine and discipline. Thus safeguarded, the power and responsibilities of government would still ultimately remain with them. Nothing could be changed or done without their consent."[1]

According to Bishop Anson, the Church is a despotism administered by the bishops.

This position stands in sharp contrast with that of the democratic reformers, whose mouthpiece is the late Secretary of the Church Reform League, *l'enfant terrible* of the movement, the Rev. Lucius Fry. He indignantly repudiates the despotic theory—

"Are individual bishops and clergymen to be any longer vested with autocratic power as lords of God's heritage, or must they in future rule and minister as constitutional pastors,—as they did in the early days of Christianity,—the bishop with his diocesan council, elected by the clergy and laity of the diocese, and the parochial incumbent with his parochial council, representative of the parish?"[2]

It is difficult to believe that two theories of the Episcopal Office so strongly opposed could be easily brought into the service of a common policy; but for the nonce that is the case. A far weightier authority than that of Mr. Lucius Fry advocates the right of the laity to a share in the government of the Church. Dr. Westcott, in an address delivered at the Durham Diocesan Conference on the 20th of October 1897, deals with the subject of Church Reform with characteristic range of thought and loftiness of tone. His position is neither clerical nor democratic, but midway between the two, and higher than both. It is, however, less the bishop than

[1] *The Guardian*, 1st December 1897.
[2] *Ibid.*, 22nd December 1897.

the President of the Christian Social Union who pens this paragraph—

"We wish then at length to call into full and ordered activity the gifts of laymen for the government of the Church. And there is the more need that we should do this, because we have come to know that the Christian faith deals with the whole sum of human affairs. We must have, therefore, the benefit of every form of experience if we are to apply the faith rightly to the different problems which are pressed upon us. These all have a spiritual side, and it is to the laity we must look for their solution. The list of subjects proposed for consideration at the late Lambeth Conference illustrates my meaning. Of the eleven subjects two had no peculiar connection with the clergy—International Arbitration and Industrial Problems. They were submitted to the clergy because it was assumed that they would consider them in the light of the central truth of the Incarnation; but it is obvious that laymen holding the same truth, and quickened by the same Spirit, might be expected to treat both of these more effectively than ecclesiastics, from their larger knowledge of affairs, or at least to contribute fresh elements to their discussion."

Certainly, if Church assemblies are to regulate the trade and politics of the Empire, it is desirable that they should include among their members a few merchants and statesmen; but we repudiate so wide an activity for such assemblies. Convocation, even when afforced by some selected or elected laymen, can hardly be equal to the task of replacing Parliament. The Church reformer will do well to banish from mind the Christian Socialist dream of a perfect world, perfectly regulated to the last detail by infallible and immaculate saints. It may inspire the peroration of a sermon; it cannot inspire a policy which can command the advocacy of thoughtful men, or win the acceptance of Parliament. The democratic reformers are oppressed by the problem of the franchise. Their political theory requires that it shall be low—their religious creed restricts it within the narrowest limits. For purposes of agitation they agree to shirk the question; but when agitation gives place to the actual work of legislation, it must be faced. The Church Reform League

has issued "an appeal to individual Churchmen," in which this disingenuous and irrational policy is openly avowed. It does, indeed, profess a "foundation principle," which must be examined later; for the rest, it stands by the familiar agitator's method, of using vague and popular terms in order to gather to the support of particular projects, which cannot safely be avowed, those multitudes whose sense of dissatisfaction is unchastened by adequate knowledge or practical prudence.

"The Church Reform League advocates various reforms concerning the position of the laity, discipline, patronage, and finance; but fully recognising that no measure of reform should be entered upon lightly or without thorough discussion, the League does not seek to bind its members to every detail of any programme. Principles always precede measures, and we say to Churchmen: 'Accept the principle of Church Reform; let the subject be thoroughly discussed from every point of view, and in due course the best way of applying the principles will become apparent.' The foundation principle on which the League works is that Church Reform should be carried out by the Church herself through her own assemblies, and that therefore self-government should be kept in the very forefront of our demands."

The League is concentrating its efforts on obtaining an Enabling Act, by which the Convocations shall be empowered to prepare a scheme for securing lay representation, on the one hand; "legislative freedom and authority . . . in all matters of discipline, organisation, administration, and worship in the Church," on the other. The supremacy of Parliament is to be safeguarded by an expedient already in operation for the government of railways and the management of charities. The canons of Convocation are to lie on the table of the Houses of Parliament for forty days; and if, within that time, neither House addresses the Crown against them, they are by order of Council, if approved by the Sovereign, to have the force of statute law.

Setting other difficulties on one side, it is evident that the reasonableness of this scheme depends on the character and authority conceded therein to the laity. The question of the franchise is primary; until that is answered, the scheme

cannot usefully be discussed. The prudent citizen will consider that the control of a great national institution, endowed with large revenues, constituting a trust property in which the whole nation has beneficiary interest, charged with important social functions which vitally affect the order and harmony of the general life, and holding, by long custom, a prominence greatly in excess of its actual power, cannot be delegated to any assembly that is not fairly representative of the national mind and conscience. The self-government of an unestablished or disestablished Church is a simple matter; but in the case of a Church which is established and endowed with great public revenues, self-government is a difficult, perhaps an insoluble problem. "No Anglican Church which has been thrown upon its own resources has been able to dispense with the authoritative participation of laymen in its affairs," observes the Bishop of Durham. Precisely and for good reason; clerical theory can withstand government and override law, but it cannot resist the pressure of poverty. A disestablished Church may be arrogant towards the State; it will be the reverse towards its own members. The power of the purse is in lay hands, and that power prevails over theories. It is alleged, however, that there is close at hand a conspicuous example of self-government in a Church which is both established and self-governing. This allegation must be carefully considered.

Church reformers, both clerical and democratic, are accustomed to refer with great confidence to the "Scotch precedent." The established self-governing Church north of the Tweed is held to provide a sufficient confutation of the argument that self-government and establishment are incompatible. In pure theory the compatibility may be admitted, but, for the very practical purpose of reforming legislation, it would be precipitate to assume so much. Certainly the "Scotch precedent" cannot be made the basis of an English policy without very large modifications. England is the most religiously divided country in the world; Scotland is the least so. The ardour with which theological questions are discussed by Scotchmen tends to obscure their substantial theological agreement. The three great divisions of Presbyterianism are held asunder by differences which

have no connection with the articles of religious belief. State Churchmen, Free Churchmen, and United Presbyterians all stand by the same ecclesiastical polity, and accept the same doctrinal standards. Dissent, in the English sense, has little strength in Scotland. Roman Catholicism prevails in some Highland valleys, and among the Irish in the large towns. Episcopalianism is thinly scattered over the country, and counts for very little in the general life of the nation. The mass of Scotchmen are Presbyterians, and their management of Church affairs is free from the violence of religious division. In England the facts might be described in precisely contrary terms. The Church is not avowedly broken into fragments, but really it is deeply divided. Dissent is powerful and aggressive. Roman Catholicism is mainly Irish, but there are special reasons why its social and political influence is out of all proportion to its numerical inferiority.

Moreover, it should be remembered that while the Scotch are the most religiously interested nation in the world, and certainly the best trained in religious knowledge, the English are probably the least so. The circumstances of Scotch history have given Presbyterianism a place in the national life which has no parallel south of the Tweed. The "Kirk" has been the Nation in its highest aspects, and for its noblest activities. The independence of Scotland was won first in the ecclesiastical, then in the civil sphere. Self-government in the Church was operative and complete when tyranny was paramount in the State, and free institutions were petrified by corruption. The aptitude for managing ecclesiastical affairs is inborn in the Scotch — they are theological from their cradles.

The Church of England is the least popular of Churches. In Scotland the Reformation was achieved by the people, and the Kirk was the creature of the conflicts and agonies of the national life. In England the Reformation was the work of government, forcibly imposed on a reluctant and often recalcitrant nation. Had the popular will been able to express itself as freely in the Southern as in the Northern Kingdom, there can be little doubt that there also the Presbyterian polity would have been broadly and permanently

established; but the forces of the Government, too weak in the North to restrain the movement of the multitude, were strong enough in the South to hamper, and, up to a certain point, to direct it. The process of Reformation was extended over a period of not less than one hundred and sixty years, from the meeting of Parliament in 1529 to the Toleration Act in 1689; in the interval the whole framework of government was violently overthrown. One king perished on the scaffold; another was dethroned and banished. The religious aspect of the country changed with bewildering rapidity. England was "Henrician," Protestant, Roman Catholic, Anglican, undenominational, Anglican with persecution, finally Anglican with toleration. The final result was a compromise. Episcopalianism and the Prayer-Book maintained their ground, but it was definitely recognised that the Church of England must renounce the hope of embodying the whole religious life of the nation. The Reformation unified Scotland and divided England. It greatly stimulated the ecclesiastical zeal of the North; it almost destroyed the Churchmanship of the South. The Church in the one country became the most democratic element in the Constitution; the Church in the other became the least so. Self-government was an unbroken tradition in the Presbyterian Kirk; it was, and is, an alien and dreaded conception in the Anglican Church.

It may be argued with much force that the *denominational* weakness of the Church of England helps rather than hinders her national service; and that the paralysis which has for nearly two centuries arrested the action of *denominational* functions, has been of no mean advantage to the nation. Deprived of the opportunities of normal ecclesiastical politics, the Anglican clergy have regarded themselves, and been regarded by the people, less as the officials of a denomination than as public servants charged with certain high duties. They have been intensely national; the whole range of parochial existence has been claimed for their sphere of activity; they have, indeed, signally failed in making their parishioners, in any definite sense, Anglicans; but they have held together in the popular mind morality and religion; they have stamped on the national conscience the conception of duty; and they have so presented the claims of Christi-

anity, that in England, after a century of drastic political and social changes, in which they have almost continually been opposed to the popular will, there is little or none of the bitter anti-clericalism which divides the nations of the Continent. The paralysed condition of the Church as a denomination has directly ministered to that wide theological liberty which is the best security for intellectual distinction. It is no mean advantage that during a period of intense mental activity, when, beyond all precedent, religious standpoints have shifted and are shifting, the Church of England has been unable to bind her own hands, and, under the influence of some temporary alarm, to destroy that wide comprehensiveness which is at once her justest title to respect and her best pledge of permanence. But, manifestly, for purposes of self-government this divided and unorganised condition is both unfortunate and embarrassing. Moreover, the course of events has tended to resuscitate the religious divisions which were the legacy of the Reformation.

Time might have softened the asperities of conflict, and even the deeper cleavages of divergent conviction might have been bridged, as the calmer reflection of a milder age appraised more justly the importance of beliefs and judged more charitably the motives of believers; these gracious results seemed to be within reach in the last century. Side by side with an appalling religious apathy, and a painfully low moral standard, there was in the much-abused eighteenth century a breadth of view and a kindliness of tone which have, perhaps, never since been equalled. But the promise was not destined to receive fulfilment. In succession the Methodist Revival, the anti-Revolutionary panic, the Reform agitation, and the Oxford Movement swept over the country. All of these possess explanations and even justifications. It is not necessary to condemn or belittle the merits of any; but this must be admitted as a general result, that the healing tendency of the eighteenth century was reversed, the floodgates of religious controversy were reopened, dying theological prejudices leaped again to life, and the religious divisions of the nation were renewed, deepened, and multiplied.

There has been this special and dangerous feature about

the most recent development of the national religious life. The line of division tends to fall less between one section of the people and another than between the clergy and the laity. This is the great weakness of the Anglican Revival. It has been emphatically in origin, process, and effect a clerical movement. Tractarianism powerfully affected the clergy; it is probably true that the majority of the clergy now hold the leading Tractarian doctrines; it is confidently asserted, and perhaps it may be true, that the superiority of the Tractarian clergy is moral and intellectual, as well as numerical. Certainly he must be blind who cannot observe an immense development in ecclesiastical parade rapidly proceeding in England. The pomp of religious functions is imposing; the religious press fills pages with descriptions of these spectacles, and even the more sober secular press finds it worth while to report them. Largely, of course, this ecclesiastical parade must be regarded as the reflection within the religious sphere of that tendency towards ostentation and magnificence which is conspicuous in modern society; but, unfortunately, it is very generally interpreted in clerical circles as the indication of a change in the popular mind with regard to the broad religious questions which were once connected with ecclesiastical parade, and are, except by a few fanatics, connected no longer.

It is a rough but not untrue description of our present position to say that the clergy are Catholic, and the laity Protestant. The effect is to render real self-government an extremely precarious experiment, predestined to infinite friction if not to early disaster. But it may be urged that while the division between clergy and laity may be strongly marked in the nation, taken as a whole, yet that it is much the contrary when a juster view is taken, and the laity are restricted to that section of the nation which is avowedly attached to the National Church. It may be admitted that the Tudor notion of Church-membership is false in principle and grossly iniquitous in practice. Citizenship and Church-membership are not, and cannot be the same thing. In England, to-day, a great proportion of the people—something more than one-third and less than one-half—is openly disconnected with the Church, either as Dissenters or as

habitually abstinent from her ministrations. Owing to the general decay of the sponsorial system, the fact of baptism now carries but a faint and doubtful testimony; probably three-fourths of the nation are baptized in church, but of these many are Dissenters, and more are brought up in almost total ignorance of religion. A definition of the laity would seem to be the very first step in the process of reform. At present the advocates of Church Reform are careful to keep this matter in the background; but it is essential and primary.

The natural plan would be to adopt the true Church definition of a layman, one who is in full communion with the Church; and this plan is advocated in some quarters. It may, however, be doubted whether the real bearings of the proposal are appreciated. In round numbers, there are, according to the friendly estimate of *The Church Year-Book*, 1,840,000 communicants in England and Wales, with a population of about 30,000,000. Communicant, it should be remembered, is an elastic term, which includes children of eleven or twelve years old, as well as persons of adult age. It would probably be fair to divide by five in order to discover the number of adult male communicants in the country. Thus we should get the number 368,000. Whitaker gives the electors for England and Wales as 5,078,394, and it must be borne in mind that the "elector" is by no means equivalent to the "adult male." It must be apparent that Parliament could never rightly delegate national functions to the representatives of less than one-thirteenth of the electorate.

Supposing, however, that the difficulty of fixing the franchise were overcome, and that satisfactory Houses of Laymen were united with the Convocations, the question remains, what functions shall be allotted to the lay element in this National Synod? This question also has been shelved for the present in the interest of the agitation now in progress; but it is vital to the success of any reform, and the prudent citizen will decline to lend his support to the movement for "self-government" until some definite answer is provided. It is evident that the laity will be allowed no voice in matters of doctrine. The clergy, and they alone, are

to legislate for the belief of the Church. Convocation is to be for the first time in its history invested with unlimited power of doctrinal definition. It is idle to argue that Parliament and the Crown retain a veto on the action of the clergy. That veto would be practically inoperative in such matters, when clergy were eager and nearly unanimous, and laity indifferent and divided. Yet it is precisely on such occasions that the probability of rash and mischievous legislation is greatest. An eager and unanimous clergy is almost always a prejudiced and panic-stricken clergy, and the legislative offspring of prejudice and panic must be mistaken, and may be disastrous.

The exaltation of the authority of Convocation which now obtains in reforming circles suggests a certain inability to realise the actual conditions under which that venerable assembly must now act. The whole tendency of social and political development since the Reformation has been adverse to the clergy, whom alone Convocation represents. The number of clergymen, about 23,000, remains stationary, while the population constantly increases. The wealth of the clergy steadily dwindles; their social and intellectual importance scarcely maintains its ground. Politically they are, as they are learning to their cost, a *quantité negligéable.* They have neither the popular influence of the Dissenting ministry nor the assured authority of the Roman priesthood; and, to complete the description of their weakness as an order, they are the worst organised "interest" in the country. Convocation can never, under modern conditions, exercise the authority of a spiritual Parliament. It is too weak for the functions of a national synod; and, as an organ of Church opinion, it is no longer required. The numerous assemblies—Diocesan Conferences, Church Congresses, Lambeth Conferences, and numerous less important gatherings,—the religious press, the platform of agitation,—these have superseded Convocation, as the instruments by which Church opinion is formed, focussed, and expressed.

It is necessary to dwell on the practical weakness of Convocation, however unpleasing the subject may be, in order justly to appraise the political wisdom of "the foundation principle" of the Church Reform League's work, namely, "that

Church Reform should be carried out by the Church herself through her own assemblies, and that therefore self-government should be kept in the very forefront of our demands." The disgust of Parliament which actuates the clerical section of the reformers, and the despair of Parliament which fills their democratic allies, have diverted the forces of Reformation from the slow but effectual remedies of constitutional action to more showy but futile expedients.

Meanwhile, attention is withdrawn from admitted abuses which are manifestly injuring the work of the Church, and bringing dishonour to Religion, and which are capable of prompt and effectual remedy by the action of Parliament, and by no other action short of the ruinous process of Disestablishment. The pressure and scandal of these abuses bring to the championship of Church Reform its most respectable and least audible elements. The practical reformers who now echo the cry for "self-government," deluded by the confidence with which that fallacy is exalted as the panacea of all spiritual ills, are preparing for themselves a cruel disappointment. The political process of "ploughing the sand" has its parallel in the ecclesiastical sphere; and the barren policy of "tinkering with the machine" is as futile in the case of the Church as in that of the State. The present agitation must lead to one of two results: on the one hand, Disestablishment; on the other hand, a long postponement of necessary reform. It is therefore much to be desired that, before it is too late, the sober, practical spirit of good citizenship may be brought into play, and the movement for extinguishing admitted and long-standing abuses in the ecclesiastical establishment brought back to those constitutional lines along which in the past excellent results have been obtained, and which remain the conditions of sound and permanent reform. What, then, we may proceed to inquire, are the objects upon which the national conscience should be directed? What are the urgent and practical abuses upon which, without delay, Parliament should lay the hand of severe and thorough restraint? It is with these questions that the remainder of this paper must be concerned.

II

The abuses of patronage have long provoked the indignation and despair of Churchmen. It is evident that they are gross and baleful; it is not less evident that they are strongly-rooted in our ecclesiastical system, and will only be removed by Parliament in deference to a genuinely popular demand. But such a demand will not easily be provided on a narrow issue. The scandal of purchase is heinous, but it is not general. The works of darkness shun the light of publicity; but what is general is the patronage system itself, and it is high time that the national conscience was brought to bear on that as a whole. The failure of the Church arises less from flagrant abuses, which are happily rare, than from the constant application of a thoroughly false system over the whole country. That the parishioners should have no voice whatever in the nomination of their parish priest is plainly wrong. They have to live with him; their happiness and parochial harmony, to say nothing of higher things, are bound up with his success; they have a permanent interest in the parish, while his interest is but transitory. They know the traditions and tendencies of the place; he is ignorant of both. He will enter into close personal relations with their children and their servants; they have an obvious right to satisfy themselves as to his personal character. He will be absolutely uncontrolled in his performance of duty as teacher and pastor; they are not unreasonable in asking some securities in his past history that such liberty will not be abused in the service of error, or the baser service of mere indolence. All this does not lead to the conclusion that popular election is either right in itself or expedient. Precisely, because the clergyman's duties as parish priest are so delicate, solemn, and important, he must not be introduced to his parish amid the squalid competitions of rival candidates, and the degrading enthusiasm of a contested election. But, though popular election is both irrational in itself and condemned by experience, yet there are other and better ways by which the parishioners could obtain that security for good appointments to the cure of their own souls which is their obvious right. In two directions, perhaps, reform ought to proceed. The

right of patronage (purged of the gross abuses to which reference has been made) should be retained in the hands of the present holders, subject to two broad limitations. On the one hand, the churchwardens, or any specified number of householders, should be permitted to make representations to the Bishop against any specific nomination; and, which is far more important, the Bishop's power of refusing institution ought to be immensely enlarged. There is, unfortunately, at present a disposition to resent the extension of episcopal authority; yet it is hard to see any better provision for protecting the spiritual interest of parishioners than that secured by strengthening the Bishop's hands in the matter of appointments. The Bishop will necessarily act with a good knowledge of the local conditions. He can receive imformation through his Archdeacons and Rural Deans, which is at once confidential and well-informed; and his permanent interest is parochial peace. Let any thoughtful man, cognisant of Church affairs in his own neighbourhood, reflect on the probable effect which such limitations of patronage rights would have had in his own district during the last twenty years. How many unfortunate appointments would have been averted, how many flourishing churches might have been preserved from wreck, how much parochial bitterness might have been avoided!

The method by which the clergyman obtains his parish is bad enough; the conditions of his tenure are even worse. He has a *property* in the charge of the people's souls; his benefice is a freehold. Short of actual crime, or gross dereliction of the trivial duties which the law requires, he may hold his parish in defiance of parishioners and Bishop alike. The late Archbishop Magee pointed out the special obligation which rests on the State to secure that the incumbents, in whose appointment the parishioners had no voice, should at least do their work. He dwelt on the folly of treating clerical offences as merely personal faults, and not as grave public offences. There is so much mistaken sentiment apparent in discussions of clerical discipline, that it may be well to recall the vigorous good sense of the great prelate.

"What, let me ask, would be the state of discipline in the navy if a captain who was found drunk on his quarter-deck

were to be simply told that he must leave his ship for a short time, that the first lieutenant would discharge his duty for him (at a very moderate salary) in the interim, and that at the expiration of that short period he should be permitted to come back with a certificate of good character, and take command of his ship again? I can see no difference between the two cases, except that the one is a far more sacred and important trust than the other. Such a state of things has much more serious consequences than if it existed in the army or the navy. No doubt, it seems cruelly hard sometimes that when a man has been overtaken in a fault he should lose such a position as that of incumbent of a parish; and the case becomes painfully sad when we think, not of the offender himself, but the innocent wife and children who are to suffer for his fault; but still the 'good of the service,' if I may be pardoned for adapting a term from military affairs, the very safety of the Church, require that sympathy of that kind for the innocent shall not be allowed to prevail where the spiritual welfare of the parish is concerned, and that the punishment shall not be relaxed against the offender."[1]

Since the Archbishop delivered the speech from which we have quoted, Parliament has passed a Clergy Discipline Act which has gone far to remedy the particular scandals against which he declaimed; but his reasoning covers a much wider area than that of gross offences. These are, after all, only very occasional, and their mischief arises rather from the widely extended repugnance at their grossness than from the actual influence of their presence. Far more spiritually ruinous is the frequent fact of parochial ineptitude, where no crime is alleged, and no vice suspected, but where no pastoral work is done, and no pastoral sympathy exists; where the Church is a religiously powerless thing, and the spiritual needs of the people seek satisfaction everywhere except where it is officially provided. Is it quite beyond the resources of statesmanship so to modify the conditions of the tenure of benefices as to make notorious inefficiency a ground for the clergyman's removal? The numerous cases of parochial failure arising from the age or physical weakness of the incumbent clearly stand on another level. They can be dealt with satisfactorily

[1] *Speeches and Addresses*, pp. 221, 222.

only in connection with a thorough revision of the finances of the Church, which on other grounds is imperatively required.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of wasteful expenditure in the world is provided by the Church of England. It would be judged incredible, were not the fact too evident to be disputed and too familiar to be observed, that at a time when the financial strain in the great towns is almost insupportable, reducing episcopal statesmanship to "business capacity," and degrading parish priests into mendicants and advertising agents, when the squalid poverty of many rural incumbents is rising to the dimensions of a great public scandal, there should be no serious attempt made in any direction to economise, and use to the best purpose, the reduced but still immense endowments of the Church. It is said that the various projects for assisting the poverty-stricken clergy with donations have failed to attract the general support of the public. Perhaps the fact may indicate the just resentment of reasonable people against the present wasteful and mischievous distribution of Church revenues. Properly administered, the endowments of the Church are still sufficient for the provision of religious ministrations to the whole people. They are not sufficient, they ought not to be sufficient, to maintain in reasonable comfort resident married clergymen with their families in multitudes of country parishes, where the tiny population provides no adequate sphere of pastoral work, and the solitude and remoteness prohibit any alternative employment. We are far indeed from suggesting that the National Church should omit from its maternal care any hamlet, however small, or solitary, or remote; but that care can be better exercised than by chaining to the spot, in the threefold inefficiency of poverty, idleness, and solitude, a clergyman whose energies might for five days out of the seven be usefully employed elsewhere. The extinction of these numerous small cures would benefit the souls of the parishioners as well as the finances of the Church. Moreover, the most fruitful source of clerical scandal, compulsory idleness, would be removed. The thorough revision of our parochial system would be a great measure of Church Reform.

The aggregate revenues of the suppressed parishes would suffice to endow adequately the remaining parishes, and thus

remove a formidable peril which now threatens the Church. It is notorious that patrons in appointing incumbents are now compelled in many instances, including some of the most important cures in the country, to give primary place to a consideration totally irrelevant to the question of fitness—the private income of the clergyman. What is really a guiltless, but not on that account less baleful, variety of simony is rapidly extending. Promotion, again, is determined by money, only the money is now no longer a bribe.

There is one more reform which a good citizen, indifferent to theoretical grievances, but keenly alive to the importance of securing the efficiency of a great national institution, would be disposed to urge. All over England the absolute authority now possessed by the incumbent to introduce changes in the conduct of public worship is a cause of friction and bitterness. Ritual questions are, notoriously, the most thorny and futile in the world; thorny, because the suspicions and resentments which they occasion are extreme; futile, because the intrinsic interest and value of the issues at stake are ludicrously inadequate to the trouble involved in their treatment. But he must know little of the present state of affairs in England who does not perceive the hardships inflicted on many parishioners and on some clergy by the present ritual anarchy. It is almost pathetic that the Church of England aspired to become, by means of the Prayer-Book, a Church of one simple use. The Prayer-Book is now claimed as the authority for more and more variant uses than those which it superseded. The deep religious divisions of the people make any parochial control of ceremonial extremely undesirable. It cannot be beyond the wisdom of Parliament to establish some authority, sufficiently respected to secure obedience, and sufficiently representative to secure impartiality. This, perhaps, might be referred with advantage to the Convocations, since the principles of many clergy would not tolerate any action from the State. Almost any system would be preferable to the existing anarchy.

The reforms we have specified (with the possible exception of the last) could never be effected by any lower authority than that of Parliament, for they concern rights of patrons in their property, rights of clergymen in their benefices and in

their personal liberty, rights of parishioners in numerous respects. They are reforms which, to the practical observer, are urgent, and, if carried, would remove the principal abuses which now hamper the working of the National Church. They would not remove grievances which now figure largely in the utterances of the advocates for reform; for those grievances are largely dictated by a conception of the relations of Church and State which is inconsistent with establishment. They would not secure "self-government," for "self-government" simply spells disestablishment. They would not be easily or quickly secured, but with patience and persistence they would be secured quite quickly enough. Abuses which have taken generations, even centuries, to develope, will hardly vanish in a decade. Above all, the prudent citizen will remember that the sphere within which legislative action can be effectual for good is very limited. After all, the efficient working of an institution depends less upon its formal excellence than upon the men by whom, and the spirit in which, it is administered. It is the high duty of the State to reform the Church. If once it be admitted that the State is unwilling or unable to perform that duty, then it is vain to conceal the truth; the unwritten contract between the civil and the spiritual organisations is in its most cardinal particular broken, and the hour of disestablishment has struck. But it is not less the duty of the Church to facilitate the reforming action of the State; by standing on its denominational claims and pressing its denominational interest, it may rouse the enthusiasm of the less reflective of its members, and possibly secure considerable denominational advantages; but it will do so at a ruinous cost. The splendid task which has been allotted to the Church of England, the moral and religious education of the masterful English race, demands as the condition of its fulfilment a large measure of denominational self-suppression; and when that is no longer conceded the national function is renounced, and the link with the national life, which has withstood the wear and tear of thirteen centuries, is snapped, in the wantonness of self-assertion, by the Church itself.

CHURCH REFORM.—III

Paper read to a Private Conference of Clergy,
28*th October* 1901

In speaking of "Church Reform" to-night, I desire to deprecate at the outset the criticisms of impatience. I do not admit the necessity of immediate dangers; it will neither surprise nor distress me if the present Parliament reaches its dissolution without touching the problem of ecclesiastical autonomy; the reform which alone seems to my thinking worthy the name, goes so deeply into the whole cast and constitution of the English Church, that not sessions, but generations, will be required to accomplish it. The furious hurry of the Church Reform League displeases and disgusts me. In the life of an institution, which already treasures a recorded history of more than thirteen centuries, it seems to me puerile to insist on the critical importance of this measure, or that election. But though puerile, it is not the less perilous; and I do not scruple to confess that I think the irrational haste with which certain proposals are being pressed on Parliament by reforming zealots may easily involve the Church in very considerable disasters.

It is not useless to make clear the objects which, as advocates of Church Reform, we have before us, even although we cannot point to any prompt and obvious methods for securing them. I suppose every change which goes deeply into established ways of thought and life must be a very gradual process; it must pass through the stages of vague aspiration, of intelligent desire, of general approval, of active advocacy, of authoritative action. I think we are hardly yet out of the stage of vague aspiration so far as the mass of Churchmen is concerned, although a handful of well-organised enthusiasts are brandishing draft Bills in the face of Parliament.

I have as my object to-night the clearing up of the great preliminary question, namely, What have we in view as the ultimate effect of our political action? I shall therefore set out frankly what I desire, quite unregardful of the very obvious criticism that there is not the least immediate probability of my getting my will. I, at least, can wait.

The Church of England is organised as a National Church, and its organisation ought to be criticised and handled on that basis. As a denomination, the Church has no sufficient reason for a parochial system which covers the whole country, and no demand for 23,000 ordained clergy. The difficulty which is now felt with respect to the incomes of the clergy illustrates the distinction which I desire to emphasise. The denomination cannot, and cannot reasonably be asked to, maintain the national system. Ardent reformers among us dwell much on the divine right of the clergy to be maintained by their congregations; and very harsh and bitter censures are sometimes passed on the Anglican laity for permitting a large proportion of the clergy to suffer the hardships of poverty. But how is this strictly denominational principle to apply to the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of parishes where the denomination hardly exists, where, if the endowment were withdrawn, it certainly would cease to exist?

The clergy are maintained in thousands of our parishes for important national ends; they have no denominational title to exist; for there are no congregations numerous enough to require, or wealthy enough to support, a resident pastor. In the poor districts of London and the other large towns, the clergy are working as the officials of a National Church, not as the ministers of a denomination. Only endowment could enable, and only establishment could require their labours, where no effective demand exists for their services, and no sufficient income could be provided for their maintenance. In truth, at every turn, the reformer must be vigilant not to apply denominational principles to national conditions. Often he will be driven to choose between denominational rights and national duties; and then, unquestionably, he will encounter a most complex and difficult problem. It is easy, and, therefore, it is common, to cut the Gordian knot by simply taking the side to which one's

personal preferences incline. The denominationalist will be tempted to repudiate as Erastian every demand for denominational self-suppression made in the interest of national service. The national Churchman will be disposed to sweep aside as savouring of clericalism every claim dictated by denominational self-respect. I would deprecate on both sides exaggerated demands. In the present abnormal state of Christendom it argues either great audacity or great ignorance to claim for any particular fragment of the Christian Society rights and liberties which are theoretically inherent in the Christian Society as a whole. In the present condition of secular politics no one without hardihood or folly would demand for the State the exercise of properly ecclesiastical functions. The existing confusion does not tolerate the logical application of any theory. The fair fabric of our Constitution is sustained by a marvellous system of working hypotheses and convenient fictions. The broad fact is that we have inherited an arrangement by which a great Christian denomination is adapted to the performance of important national functions; and we have to reconcile in some effective harmony the irreducible demands of the denomination with the necessary terms of national service. It is sufficiently well known that the movement for "Church Reform" is now effectively organised and energetically pushed forward. With two or three exceptions, all the Diocesan Bishops have "expressed approval of and goodwill towards" the work of the Church Reform League. It is stated "that close upon two hundred Rural Deans," that is, nearly one-fourth of the whole number, have already joined the League. The ardour and ability, which distinguish the protagonists of the movement, cannot be doubted, nor the plausibility of their contentions, nor the general excellence of their motives. But when their proposals are examined with the view of basing on them a practical scheme of Church Reform, such a scheme as might be introduced into Parliament with some reasonable prospect that it would be accepted, they hitherto have egregiously failed to justify either the enthusiasm of their advocates or the expectations of the sympathetic public. I shall not on this occasion examine in detail the proposals of the Church Reform League, because my present object is not criticism,

but the putting before you of a policy which, in my judgment, better deserves the name of Church Reform than anything now so described. But for many reasons I cannot proceed without bringing clearly before you the extreme denominational weakness of the National Church, which is a fact, humiliating without doubt and scarcely credible, but none the less certain, and of the utmost moment. The *Church Year-Book* estimates the whole number of communicants in England and Wales at something less than two millions. The exact figures are 1,974,629. In round numbers, the population of the country was then no less than thirty-two millions. Thus the communicants numbered one in sixteen of the population. Whitaker's *Almanac* gives the number of Parliamentary Electors as 5,287,285 for England and Wales. It would be an extremely favourable estimate to reckon one-fifth of the communicants to be Parliamentary Electors. My personal belief, based partly on probabilities, partly on observation, inclines to accept one-eighth as a more likely proportion. Assuming, however, the higher estimate to be correct, we have a body of 400,000 communicants out of 5¼ million electors—rather less than one in thirteen. The extreme denominational weakness which these figures discover, is in my judgment fatal to every project of Church Reform which proceeds on logical denominational lines. It is fatal, because it enshrines a practical absurdity. No House of Commons will ever consent to transfer the status and property of the National Church to a small section of the nation. If the denominational strength of the Church of England had been more commensurate with its national pretensions, I can conceive strong practical reasons for devolving ecclesiastical business upon a representative denominational body; but in view of the actual circumstances, such devolution does not seem to me to come within the range of practical politics. It follows that the inevitable preliminary to the grant of Church autonomy is a measure of disestablishment and disendowment. The Church of England can only become a denomination at the price of surrendering the national status and the national religious endowments. I have always thought, and I think more firmly than ever, that such surrender is an excessive price to

pay for the sorry boon of denominational liberty; and, therefore, I reject as impracticable every scheme of reform that proceeds on logical denominational lines.

The prime object of all sound reform must, from my standpoint, take account less of the Church than of the purpose for which the Church exists. The Church of England exists in order to bring Christianity effectively into the life of the English People. This purpose is served *directly* on denominational lines, and so far the denominational organisation of the National Church ought to be as efficient as higher considerations permit; *indirectly*, the Christianising of our public life is effected in many ways, not always easy to distinguish and appraise, but clearly distinct from, and sometimes unfavourable to, specific denominational action. To give but a single example. From a denominational standpoint our system of patronage and our lack of moral discipline are grossly scandalous, and, indeed, I observe that they attract the early attention of ecclesiastical reformers of the denominational type; but from the national standpoint these things have a very different aspect; and it has been argued that, some minor abuses apart, the general religious influence of the Church of England is considerably increased by a patronage system which draws closely together the clergy and the landowning class, and by a lack of moral discipline which permits to large numbers of vaguely-thinking, laxly-living people the right to frequent Christian assemblies, and live in the atmosphere of Christian conviction.

I submit that the essential condition of real Church Reform is the recognition of the national character and functions of the Church. The question for the reformer is, How can the Church of England be made more efficient for its national work? The very definition of that work excludes any infidelity to essential Christianity, while it authorises, nay requires, the surrender of everything which is not essential. Now the very first fact which encounters the reformer, whose honest aim is to strengthen the Church for its national task, is the formidable fact that a great proportion of the National Christianity now lies outside its communion. I apprehend that in the first instance he will address himself to this matter. An efficient National Church is the true and com-

plete expression of the National Christianity. In proportion as large numbers of Christians refuse its communion and repudiate its authority, its national character is impaired, and its power of national service restricted. If the process of alienation reach a certain point, not very easy to determine, but manifest enough when actually reached, the national character of a Church is totally destroyed, and its power of performing national functions altogether paralysed. Historical title-deeds to status and property, legal theories of character and functions, ecclesiastical names and claims, may be, probably will be, unaltered, nay more than ever asserted and insisted upon, but the broad fact will be apparent to all the world. That National Church may be an admirable denomination, but as a National Church it will be seen to be an organised hypocrisy. An illustration which will immediately occur to your minds was the Established Church of Ireland. Church Reform, then, must be directed to the end of preserving, strengthening, or, if the case stand thus, recovering, the national character of the Church of England; and this will involve, in the first instance, so widening the basis of the Church as to make it more effectively representative of the National Christianity. By such considerations the ecclesiastical reformers of the past were led to attempts at "comprehension." Protestant Christians, it was thought, ought to be able to combine in one National Church, by removing from its system all that offended conscience, and by tolerating a considerable variety of non-essential divergence. Comprehension which involves amalgamation of denominations will not now commend itself to any thoughtful reformer; for experience during the last two hundred and fifty years has demonstrated both the extraordinary vitality of denominationalism, and (what our ancestors could not easily believe) its perfect compatibility with social order and political unity. But the religious reasons for a comprehension of another kind grow daily more apparent and imperious. The National Church does not now stand over against a few novel and heavily suspected sectaries, but has to define its attitude towards a federation, or quasi-federation of organised and militant Churches, some of which represent a religious energy and a volume of Christian conviction far greater than its own. These "Free Churches,"

as they have chosen to style themselves, are not only mighty evangelistic agencies; they add their full contribution to theological science, and they enrich the spiritual life of Christendom with their full proportion of beneficent and saintly lives. I do not think any just and well-informed social student will admit any moral inferiority in the Christians who worship and work outside the National Church. But while this immense change has taken place in the balance of ecclesiastical power and the distribution of the national Christianity, the National Church not only maintains its ancient attitude of contemptuous condemnation towards the denominations, but even tends to grow more scornful and severe. This may seem a hard saying in view of the interchange of courtesies between Churchmen and Nonconformists which are now fashionable, and in view of the wide recognition by Churchmen of the admirable theological and social work of Nonconformists; but it is none the less true. There never has been any time since the Reformation at which the English Hierarchy has adopted so firm and united an attitude of hostility to the denominations, as such. The invalidity of non-episcopal ministries is now everywhere assumed, and the invalidity of one of the Sacraments ministered by the non-episcopally ordained clergy is almost as generally affirmed. It is suggested, or stated outright, that the Nonconformists are schismatics; they are exhorted and invited to return to their allegiance; their ministers are encouraged to repudiate their Orders and accept reordination. In short, our attitude towards the Nonconformists is essentially that of the Roman Church toward ourselves. The formal system of the Prayer-Book and Canons unquestionably requires this attitude. But that formal system represents the vindictive policy of the Restoration,—a policy which cumbered the Statute-Book with a series of barbarous laws, of which in some sense the Act of Uniformity is the sole surviving relic, and the Canons of 1603 express the grotesque and exaggerated doctrines of Divine Right which have long perished from the public mind. However, intolerance fits in too well with the tendencies and aptitudes of human nature not to command an acceptance far more thorough and effective than better things can obtain. The effect is to divide England

religiously into two camps. The National Church competes with the "Free Churches" for the spiritual allegiance of the people, and, at the end of every decade, it is more clearly seen that her relative hold on the nation diminishes. The growth of the English Church during the nineteenth century is constantly advanced with confidence and even exultation in Anglican circles. I take leave to say that the growth of the Dissenting bodies, even within this realm, has been far more considerable; while, if the world at large be considered, there is no comparison. Anglican expansion is a petty fact beside the expansion of non-episcopal Christianity in the British Empire, the United States, and the mission field. It is, in truth, becoming patently absurd to emphasise the exclusive character of a Church which is repudiated by half the Christians in the Nation, and, in the world at large, is actually one of the smaller denominations. By some means the National Church must again be brought into spiritual relations with the mass of English Christians. This cannot be secured by an absorption of the denominations; it can in some degree be secured by their recognition. Denominationalism might be mitigated by occasional conformity. The general religious sentiment of the nation might, I think, acquiesce in the continued possession of the national religious endowments by the Church of England, if that Church were plainly ministrant to ends which were universally recognized as important, and which otherwise could not be so successfully pursued. So long as half the Christians in the country are officially excluded from the communion of the National Church, it is impossible to defend successfully the establishment and endowment of one denomination. I submit, therefore, that the Rubric at the end of the Confirmation Service ought to be authoritatively explained to apply only within the Church, and not to have reference to the communicants of other Churches. Episcopal confirmation has of late years been unduly and unfortunately exaggerated by some Anglican teachers. Some security for adequate knowledge and suitable dispositions must be insisted upon in every organised Church as a condition of admission to Holy Communion; confirmation by the Bishop provides all the security we have in the Church of England. Non-episcopal confirmation among the

Greeks and Lutherans, other ceremonies designed with similar views among the Presbyterians and Nonconformists, serve the same ends. Under due disciplinary safeguards, provided by suitable authority with reference to circumstances, I would urge the admission of communicants from the orthodox, organised non-episcopal Churches to communion in the National Church. Nor would I shrink from the undoubted implications of such action. I would recognise frankly the validity of the non-episcopal ministries, and so clear away the real root of denominational bitterness, and provide the condition of a self-respecting and honest denominational alliance. I would abandon once and for all that policy of individual conversions which we resent so deeply when applied to ourselves, and I would negotiate terms of intercommunion with every ordered and orthodox Christian Church. I am prepared at the beginning of the twentieth century to adopt, for practical purposes, the platform proposed by Jeremy Taylor in the middle of the seventeenth: "We have no other help in the midst of these distractions and disunions, but all of us to be united in that common term, which as it does constitute the Church in its being such, so it is the medium of the communion of saints, and that is the creed of the Apostles; and in all other things an honest endeavour to find out what truths we can, and a charitable and mutual permission to others that disagree from us and our opinions."[1] When we turn from the Christians of England, towards whom the National Church ought to be in some effective spiritual relation, to that great majority of English folk who, while for the most part respectful to Christianity and disposed to welcome its influence on society, are outside definite Christian belief and fellowship, we have to consider facts which present themselves to every Christian denomination as charged in measure with the world's conversion, but are particularly relevant to the duty of that Christian denomination which has also the character of a National Church. We must examine our system, and discover whether it contains faults which will operate as hindrances to our religious work. Stumbling-blocks, we know, will always impede the accept-

[1] Epistle Dedicatory to "The Liberty of Prophesying," *Works*, Heber's edition, vol. vii. p. ccccxxiii.

ance of Christianity. I do not refer to the inherent difficulties of the Christian Revelation. S. Paul's words will always retain their relevance: "The word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness." The Church cannot mitigate, still less remove, the inevitable objections of human pride, obstinacy, and sin. It is not of such difficulties that I now speak. These, moreover, have not been the really effective hindrances to the spread of Christianity. History delivers no doubtful testimony as to the wide-reaching scandals caused by intellectual disloyalty, and moral defect conspicuous in the Church, which claims to deliver a Gospel of Divine Truth and Righteousness. Charity requires that Christians should be rigorous critics of the ecclesiastical systems they accept. We are led, then, to the consideration of the working system and formularies of the Church of England. How far do they contain abuses and errors which, so long as they are deliberately cherished, must operate as stumbling-blocks to faith? I shall by implication answer that question, and save your time, by setting down a series of practical reforms.

1. Parliament should empower the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to amalgamate at their discretion all cures containing a population of less than 1500, and to accumulate the endowments at certain centres, where colleges of clergy might be stationed, having spiritual charge over the amalgamated parishes.
2. All titles for Ordination should be given from such centres, or from certain specified town parishes.
3. The age for the priesthood should be raised to twenty-six years; and celibacy should be insisted on until the age of thirty.
4. The Bishops' Examination for Priest's Orders should be a thorough test of three years' theological study during the diaconate.
5. Parliament should create Diocesan Boards with power—
   (α) to administer episcopal and other public patronage and approve the nominees of private patrons.
   (β) to determine the ritual of parish churches, and settle all disputes relating to public worship.
   (γ) to act as public prosecutor under the Discipline Acts; to insist on the retirement of incom-

petent clergy; to assign pensions to retiring incumbents, etc.

6. The Bishops should appoint Diocesan Confessors, assign places and authorise forms for the hearing of private confessions, and restrain all other clergy from hearing confessions save *in articulo mortis.*
7. That fixed contributions from all the episcopal incomes should be made to a fund for the payment of episcopal expenses incurred in the administration of the Clergy Discipline Acts.
8. That the Convocations should be reformed, amalgamated, and (subject to parliamentary control) given powers to act with respect to purely ecclesiastical matters.
9. That the representation of the Episcopate in the House of Lords should be restricted to the two primates, and the Bishops of London, Winchester, and Durham; that the normal income of all bishops, not being also spiritual peers, should be reduced to £2500; and the balance of the episcopal incomes should become a fund for the gradual increase of the Episcopate.
10. That all partisan patronage trusts should be prohibited as contrary to the public interest.

The effect of these changes would be mainly on the clergy. They would be better educated, better trained, better organised, better disciplined, better paid; and these excellent results would be attained mainly by a rearrangement of existing resources, and the revivifying of existing machinery. The anarchic individualism of the clergy, which now reduces Episcopal authority to the merest shadow, would be attacked at its roots. If every newly-ordained man had to serve a three years' diaconate under the government of a responsible and trustworthy rector, and in preparation for a substantial and searching examination, he would be little likely to exhibit that startling, yet familiar, blend of ignorance and wilfulness which is the natural result of a brief diaconate spent in a self-chosen parish, often under influences eminently unfavourable to habits of discipline and the acquisition of sound knowledge. The prohibition of marriage before the age of thirty could never be a hardship, would in most cases of those

who married be a considerable advantage, and would in many cases avert matrimony altogether. I admit the truth of the statement that the people of England desire a married clergy, but I demur to the common assumption that their approval extends to a prematurely and improvidently married clergy. The question of the clergy lies at the root of ecclesiastical failure; and no reforms will be worth anything which do not improve the quality of the clergy. It is literally true that, in spite of all the anomalies and even abuses of our existing system, a good clergyman finds no real difficulty in his work. The demand for changes of system come from the badly-worked parishes; the laity are quite content with the present situation when they have a parish priest whom they like and trust. But the supply of candidates tends to fail, and of good candidates has almost wholly failed. I think it is true that a certain number of the abler and better educated and more sensitive men are alienated from Ordination by our formularies. Now, it is vital to a National Church that its clergy should have direct and easy access to every section of the people. Burke's splendid description of the National Church, idealised by his ardent mind but preserving the true lineaments and proportions of the historic institution, remains a noble statement of essential principles. It suited his argument to speak mostly of the incomes of the clergy; but it applies with equal force to their intellectual quality.

"The people of England know how little influence the teachers of religion are likely to have with the wealthy and powerful of long standing, and how much less with the newly fortunate, if they appear in a manner no way assorted to those with whom they must associate, and over whom they must even exercise, in some cases, something like an authority. What must they think of that body of teachers, if they see it in no part above the establishment of their domestic servants?"[1]

An ignorant and intellectually unsympathetic clergy must alienate from Christianity the robuster intelligence and wider knowledge of our time; and therefore the Church reformer must anxiously consider whether there is anything in the subscriptions and formularies of the Church which might

[1] *Works*, iii. p. 367.

reasonably offend intelligent and thoughtful men. Now, here we cannot forget that we are living in a time of transition, and that such times are not only impatient of formularies, *ex hypothesi* more or less obsolete, but are the most unfavourable in the world for the provision of new formularies. Therefore, I would look rather to a generous tolerance of free interpretations of existing formularies, than to a drastic abolition of formularies, or to the provision of new ones. Here, again, we come back to the clergy. If the administration of our Church system be vested in the hands of wide-minded, well-educated men, the difficulties arising from partially obsolete formularies will, in practice, be greatly diminished. Generally I urge the policy of the "open door" with regard to theological opinion within the National Church. Limits to legitimate Christian thought there clearly must be; and, as clearly, they must have reference to men's belief about Him, discipleship to Whom constitutes Christianity. I think Bishop Harvey Goodwin was right when he thus defined the Holy Catholic Church: "When we regard the world, not as we should wish it to be, but as it is, we may fairly make a division between those who call Jesus Christ Lord and those who do not; this is a clear and distinct line of division; and for certain good and intelligible purposes, those who are on the one side of the line may be said to constitute 'the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints,' and those who are on the other side of the line not to constitute any part of that Church."[1]

I would therefore limit subscription to the two Sacramental Creeds; and, with respect to their interpretation, I would certainly desire that so much liberty should be recognised as is consistent with a distinct and operative belief in the Incarnation. The Virgin-Birth of our Saviour is the traditional Christian notion of the mode of that supreme Mystery; and bodily resuscitation, in the coarsest sense, was, and I suppose generally is, the traditional Christian notion of the mode of Christ's Resurrection. Personally, I do not feel the slightest wish to touch the consecrated phrases of the Catholic Creeds, nor do I feel disposed to speculate as to the modes of those Mysteries, which seem to me vital to Chris-

[1] *Foundations of the Creed*, pp. 287, 288.

tianity itself, but I feel extraordinarily reluctant to shut the door of Ordination on men as strongly convinced as I am of the Truth of the Incarnation, but more intellectually sensitive about accepting as historic facts traditions which, however probable and morally precious, cannot be truly said to have behind them adequate historic evidence. I should rejoice to know that the Bishops would not in such cases refuse Ordination, and I would readily exert myself to co-operate in creating a public opinion within the Church, which would strengthen their Lordships' hands in carrying out a tolerant policy; but I cannot see any reason either for laying aside, or for tampering with, the language of Creeds which express with so much authority and such eloquent terseness the Religion of the Incarnation.

I turn then to the formularies. Here I must express my belief that the changes in the Prayer-Book really demanded by the best conscience and intellect of modern Christians are wonderfully few. Some of them, however, are important. I will content myself with indicating those which seem to me the chief.

1. Ordination of Deacons—

   Remove the third question, namely—

   "Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament?"

   I do believe them;

   and substitute the following from the Ordination of Priests:—

   Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all Doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?

   I am so persuaded.

   Accepted conclusions of Biblical Criticism render the profession of "unfeigned belief" in "all the Canonical Scriptures" unwarrantable and absurd.

2. That assent to the Thirty-Nine Articles be no longer required of the Clergy, and that the statutory obligation to read them publicly at institution be abrogated.

3. That the Athanasian Creed be removed from the public

services, and printed in an Appendix to the Prayer-Book, together with the Thirty-Nine Articles.

4. That a fresh revision of the Lectionary be made, with the express object of removing from the list of lessons all plainly unedifying passages.
5. That alternative Psalms be provided in place of the imprecatory Psalms for use at the daily services.
6. That an alternative Burial Service be provided, to be used in the case of baptized persons who have lived carelessly.
7. That the Rubric at the end of the Confirmation Service be amended so as to imply no exclusion of communicants from Non-Episcopal Churches.
8. That obsolete Rubrics be removed.

In conclusion, I revert to the point at which I started. There is no desperate hurry. We are not ready for autonomy, even if we could get it, which we cannot. Agitation for autonomy is, in effect, agitation for Disestablishment. But we can, and we ought, to work hard to fashion public opinion within the Church on that matter which I have placed in the forefront to-night, and which must determine the whole character of whatever reforms are ultimately effected—the frank recognition of the non-episcopal Churches, and intercommunion with them. I think also that it is not wholly unprofitable to fasten attention on the main points of practical reform which actual experience indicates as important in the interest, not, perhaps, of the denomination as such, but certainly of its highest possibilities of religious influence as the National Church.

THE INFLUENCE OF CRITICAL THEORY ON THE INTERPRETATION AND AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

Preface

"The publication of Dr. Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* may be said to mark an epoch among English Christians in the history of the subjects of which he treats."[1] This observation of the late Bishop of Colchester is certainly true. The *Introduction* not only made accessible to the general public the results which the criticism of the Old Testament had reached, but, what was still more important, it enabled the ordinary student to understand the processes by which those results were reached. In some sense it was a challenge to average intelligence. The *Introduction*, of course, did not stand alone. It had been preceded by works, dealing mainly with separate books, which had made it possible for the untechnical student to understand the methods and tendencies of criticism. The publications issued by Messrs. T. & T. Clark in the "Foreign Theological Library" and other translations, had brought within reach of the English reader many of the principal productions of the German critics. And it has been succeeded by many books and translations. Yet the *Introduction* riveted public attention in a way which had no parallel in the case of the other books. The character of the work as a survey of the whole ground, the high reputation of the author, the thoroughness of the treatment, the lucidity of the arrangement, above all, the devout and restrained tone of the writing—all combined to arrest the notice and disarm the opposition of the theological public. Thus the claims of critical theory to the acceptance of thoughtful Christians

[1] *Old Testament and New Criticism*, p. 40.

have, especially within the last ten years, been powerfully presented in England. Inevitably they have encountered the firm resistance of theological conservatives. It is to be regretted that the champions of the Traditional View should endeavour to unfairly prejudice the religious public against critical views by dwelling on the alleged infidelity of the leading continental critics. They should reflect that their own efforts are constantly directed to the maintenance of the idea that critical views and Christian belief are inherently incompatible, and that therefore the blame for whatever infidelity exists among modern critics lies to a very great extent at their own doors. Moreover, they adopt a very perilous course even for the interest of their own cause. Accusations of bias can be urged on both sides, and on a comparison of prejudices the Traditionalists will hardly show to advantage.

The objection against critical conclusions, which is most passionately urged, and which seems to be most effective with the religious public, is that based on the undoubted acquiescence of our blessed Lord in the traditional Jewish belief about the Old Testament. If this objection be valid, it carries farther than, perhaps, its advocates would approve. The traditional Jewish belief is admittedly in need of "rectification," and the orthodox champions (*e.g.* Bishops Ellicott and Blomfield) do not scruple to "rectify" it with the aid of criticism. In so doing they yield the very point at issue—the legitimacy of the critical method as applied to Holy Scripture.

In this essay the effect of critical theory on the interpretation and authority of Holy Scripture is alone dealt with. The consequences—as they appear probable to the writer—have been plainly stated; and, as stated, they are, perhaps, sufficiently serious. It has not come within the scope of the argument to adduce the reasons which compel, in the writer's opinion, an acceptance of the main critical positions. Unquestionably the difficulties of such acceptance are great, but the difficulties of rejection are greater. The traditional view, in short, is untenable.

The question is eminently urgent. In England, beyond other countries, the core of practical religion is affected when the Bible is touched. The problems with which Biblical

criticism is concerned are now extensively discussed by the laity. The "man in the street" is agitated by them; the ephemeral literature of the day swarms with discussions of them. Under these circumstances the clergy cannot, even if they wish, hold aloof. It is their duty, and surely it is their wisdom, to consider carefully what the probable consequences of the new views will be, and whether or not they affect the central verity of the Christian Religion.

Perhaps we should here refer to the essay on "the Holy Spirit and Inspiration," which gave an immense notoriety to an otherwise rather heavy volume of theological articles, published in 1889 under the title of *Lux Mundi.* The brilliant author of the essay takes for granted the authority of the traditional Canon. He has convinced himself by arguments, which it did not come within his province to state, that the Church's decision sufficiently marks the canonical books as "inspired," in spite of qualities in the books themselves which suggest the precise opposite of "inspiration." "To believe in the inspiration of Holy Scripture is to put ourselves to school with every part of the Old Testament as of the New."[1] With characteristic courage, Canon Gore proceeds to illustrate his meaning by adducing the case of the "imprecatory Psalms." We have referred to his argument below, and expressed our conviction of its inadequacy. This assumption of the Canon as determining the estimate of the documents appears to us inconsistent with any real acceptance of critical theory. It would seem that, if critical methods are to be applied, they must be honestly applied. An *arriere pensée* to the effect that, whatever the critical verdict, certain documents are inspired, and, as such, necessary agents in the spiritual education of the Christian, (which is Canon Gore's position,) seems equally unreasonable in itself, and impossible in practice.

It is noteworthy that in the case of the Book of Ecclesiastes, apparently adduced as an example of the lowest degree of inspiration, the critical judgment is set aside. We are told, "Inspiration excludes conscious deception or pious fraud";[2] but what if critical examination compels us to face one or

[1] *Lux Mundi*, p. 349 [4th edition].

[2] *Ibid.* p. 353; cf. *Lux Mundi*, p. 343, with Driver's *Introduction*, pp. 447–449.

the other in a canonical document? We have discussed below the case of the Deuteronomist, which might be plausibly presented as a crucial example of both conscious deception and pious fraud. Or, to take an example from the Chronicler. In 2 Sam. xxi. 19 the slaying of Goliath of Gath is ascribed to "Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite." The Chronicler, who lived about seven hundred years after David, and who can therefore hardly be credited with any independent knowledge which could qualify him to revise the older histories of David's age, overcomes the palpable objection that Elhanan's exploit was also attributed to David, by "inventing"[1] a brother of Goliath. So we read in 1 Chron. xx. 5, "Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gititte." Can it be called an unreasonable opinion that the Chronicler was guilty of conscious deception and pious fraud? And if that opinion is reasonable, how is it to be reconciled with the statement that "inspiration excludes conscious deception or pious fraud"? We are not maintaining that there is no other explanation,[2] but only that this is the most reasonable explanation, and cannot therefore be prohibited in the interest of a wholly arbitrary dictum as to what is, or is not, involved in "inspiration."

Canon Gore gives absolute importance to the fact that our Lord apparently accepted without question the prevailing Jewish notions as "to the real inspiration of their canon in its completeness," but he declines to attribute any such importance to the specific instances in which our Saviour seems to contradict critical theory. This distinction appears to the present writer wholly arbitrary, and therefore untenable.

It remains to explain the sense in which we use the terms critical theory, interpretation, and authority.

By "critical theory" we mean a view of Scripture, or of any part of Scripture, which is based on reasons which are wholly independent of religious or ecclesiastical considerations, which are, in fact, precisely the same reasons as are allowed

[1] The phrase is Professor Cheyne's, *Aids to Devout Study of Criticism*, p. 23.

[2] *Vid.* Kirkpatrick's note on 2 Sam. xxi. 19 in "Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges." "*It is almost certain that one reading is an accidental corruption of the other.*" Unfortunately the Chronicler's character prohibits this way of escape.

to determine belief in the case of ordinary human literature. We have throughout accepted Dr. Driver's right to speak in the name of critical science; and we have thought it well, both in his case and in that of other scholars to whom we have referred, to quote the actual words which we have in mind.

By "interpretation" we have chiefly meant popular interpretation, such as must be given in school or church.

By "authority" we mean the religious weight given to the Scriptures themselves; the place they are allowed to have in determining belief and regulating conduct.

The day has long passed when, in the name of religion, criticism of the Bible could be condemned. It is becoming apparent to the dullest and most reluctant understandings, that the validity of all exercise of the critical faculty is ultimately contingent on the validity of its exercise over the entire field of literature. To deny the truth-discovering virtue of sound critical methods in any part of that field, is to throw doubt on its value in every other part. Such methods are either universally applicable because intrinsically sound, or they are really applicable nowhere. This is generally allowed, if not in explicit words, yet by the weightier confession of practical use. The most conservative students of the Scriptures employ necessarily the same methods of investigation within the narrow limits which they permit themselves, as those bolder students employ in order to reach the conclusions which at once anger and dismay them.[1] It is not, of course, disputed that there is a sphere in which critical methods have no validity; manifestly their validity is confined to the specific sphere within which they can be applied; but within that sphere they must have free course, or no course at all. Practically the validity of the critical methods now adopted by students of literature is not disputed. There may exist large hesitation in many minds, and even

[1] Cf. Bp. Ellicott's rectification of the "Traditional View" of the Bible in *Christus Comprobator*, pp. 25, 70. Also Bp. Blomfield, *The Old Testament and the New Criticism*, p. 93 ff.

hostility to some proposals of the more advanced representatives of critical studies; but the legitimacy of the methods employed is not seriously contested anywhere, only the manner and spirit of their exercise, and the conclusions to which they lead. Dr. Driver's assertion does not appear to advance beyond the facts—

"It is impossible to doubt that the main conclusions of critics with reference to the authorship of the Books of the Old Testament rest upon reasonings the cogency of which cannot be denied without denying the ordinary principles by which history is judged and evidence estimated. Nor can it be doubted that the same conclusions, upon any neutral field of investigation, would have been accepted without hesitation by all conversant with the subject: they are only opposed in the present instance by some theologians, because they are supposed to conflict with the requirements of the Christian faith."[1]

It must, however, be conceded by the most ardent disciples of Biblical Criticism, that the apprehensions of orthodoxy are not unnatural, nor, indeed, altogether ill-founded. Nor can it be honestly denied that the willingness to recognise and accept the truth ascertained by the methods of critical science has not always been sufficiently disciplined by the ability to estimate the effects of change on the fundamental verities of religion. New views are adopted for critical reasons which appear, and perhaps really are irresistible; but it is too often forgotten that the older views, which have been so easily cast aside, sustained the weight of permanently precious beliefs, which—when their scriptural bases have been removed—seem to lose their validity, and, with their validity, the power to influence and control human conduct. It is natural that the perils of undue haste in abandoning long-established views should be most plainly perceptible to those who are charged with the actual administration of the Church. Teachers of religion, compelled in the course of their duty to realise the extremely slender hold which doctrine under the most favourable conditions can maintain over human action, are better able than others to divine the probable consequences of a sudden and general disturbance of the accepted bases of

[1] *Literature of the Old Testament*, p. xiv.

doctrine. They will demand, and surely with good reason, as the condition of their own co-operation with the advocates of critical liberty, that, together with the largely destructive process of scientific criticism, there shall proceed a constructive process of reconciliation, which shall provide a new basis to replace the old, which has been rendered insecure. And if it be urged that truth is the one legitimate object of intellectual inquiry, and that the labours of the reconciler suggest a certain reluctance to accept truth for its own sake, it may suffice to reply that truth is many-sided, and may not be adequately reached by any one method, or completely discovered in any one direction; that, in fine, the cause of truth is best served when no particular enthusiasm is permitted to escape from the restraining authority of the general interest.

We propose to show, on the one hand, that the accepted results of critical science have affected, and that very seriously, both the interpretation and the authority of Holy Scripture; and, on the other hand, that the essential elements of the Christian Religion have not been, and cannot be, affected by Biblical criticism. Our method will be to adduce sufficient examples of the change involved in the acceptance of the critical theory, and to show how that change, amounting even in some cases to a revolution, is yet not inconsistent with an unrelaxed tenure of the central Christian Verity.

1. To start with the general conception of the Scriptures, it is difficult to reconcile critical theory with any religious definition of canonicity. The traditional Christian notion of canonicity certainly includes the idea of special religious authority. For English Churchmen it may suffice to appeal to the Sixth Article. There the distinction between the "canonical books of the Old and New Testament" and "the other books" is based on universal acceptance and doctrinal authority. The former contain, declare, and prove articles of Faith; the latter are not applied "to establish any doctrine." Such a distinction between the books of Scripture obviously assumes both the existence and the action of an external Authority, competent to sit in judgment on competing documents, and to determine their religious quality. The history of the Canon as it is now known cannot be said to justify these assumptions.

Neither among the Jews nor among Christians has there existed any Authority competent to perform this task, if competence be understood to include immunity from error; and, when the determining of the ultimate standard of Belief is at issue, it could hardly include less. It is, indeed, scarcely true to say that external Authority has acted in the matter; both the Jewish and the Christian Churches in their official decisions appear to have followed and endorsed established usage. The "official conclusion" of "the gradual formation"[1] of the Old Testament Canon was reached about the end of the first century of our era. "Practically, we may be sure, its bounds had long before been decided by popular use." The limits of the New Testament Canon were not finally fixed until the fourth century or later; and the influence which established the authority of the traditional Canon was less official than personal. "The Canon of the New Testament, which was supported by the learning of Jerome and the independent judgment of Augustine, soon gained universal acceptance wherever Latin was spoken. . . . From this time (*i.e.* beginning of the fifth century) the Canon of the New Testament in the West was no longer a problem, but a tradition. If old doubts were mentioned, it was rather as a display of erudition than as an effort of criticism."[2]

In the case of both Testaments, the ecclesiastical decisions did but ratify the popular practice, which itself reflected the result of a gradual and unconscious process of "natural selection."

What, in the first instance, were the dominant considerations which commended documents to public acceptance, is not altogether clear. In the case of the Old Testament, writings may have been admitted into the Canon, or rejected from it, as they presented the character of prophecy;[3] in the New Testament probably the governing consideration was

[1] Ryle, *Canon of Old Testament*, p. 172.

[2] Westcott, *Canon of New Testament*, p. 455.

[3] Cf. Bruce, *Apologetics of Christianity*, p. 319, Edinburgh, 1892: "A canonical book was a book written by a recognised prophet. Other books, however good, were refused a place in the Canon, because they were not written under prophetic inspiration." The straits to which the retention of the notion of canonicity in the teeth of critical theory will reduce an acute thinker, may be gathered from the discussion in chap. ix. of the *Apologetics*.

Apostolic Authorship, either direct, as in the case of the Pauline Epistles, or indirect, as in the case of S. Luke's writings. If, however, these were the decisive considerations, it is sufficiently plain that no adequate application of them was made either in the practice or in the official decisions of the respective Churches. Criticism hardly authenticates the reasons which presumably determined canonicity. The prophetical character of the Old Testament writings is scarcely assured by their place in the Canon; nor is Apostolic Authorship a sufficient explanation of canonicity in the case of the Christian documents. The learned Bampton Lecturer of 1893 has described the process by which, among the Jews, books succeeded or failed in gaining admission to the Canon . . . "the central idea with the Jews was that of Prophecy Their rough conception seems to have been that books composed during the prevalence of Prophecy were inspired in the strict and true sense, and that those composed after the cessation of Prophecy were not. I am only saying what their idea was, not that it was carried out with perfect accuracy. A margin, and a somewhat broad margin, has to be allowed. There needed to be not only the fact that Prophecy should cease, but also the conscious recognition that it had ceased, which would naturally take some time longer. The idea was probably a vague and general idea, not precise and definite. Equally wanting in precision would be also the dating of the later books which were candidates for admission to the Canon. A book like Chronicles or Ecclesiastes, for instance, would glide quietly into circulation, and no one would know to fifty or a hundred years when it had been composed. There is one book which bears its date upon its front, the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach. In that case the author gives his name, and makes it clear (at least his grandson makes it clear) to within ten or twenty years when he lived. And the consequence was that it was excluded from the Canon. The book was read and treated with respect, but not regarded as canonical. The Books of Daniel and Ecclesiastes probably gained their place in the first instance under cover of the names which they bore. In both cases there would be a predisposition to receive them—Ecclesiastes, because it continued the line of the works of the

Wise Men, for the analogy of works of established authority would always carry great weight; and Daniel, because it struck the patriotic and prophetic note at the time of the Maccabæan rising. Perhaps if Ecclesiasticus had been anonymous, and had not revealed its true date and character so plainly, it might have had the same fortune as Ecclesiastes." [1]

It is obvious that no real distinction exists between the books which were admitted into the Canon on a false assumption of their origin and character, and those which earned an honourable exclusion by the impolitic honesty or irrepressible vanity of their authors. If it be urged that the margin of uncertainty is not a wide one, that, as a matter of fact, both in the Old and in the New Testament the line is fairly perceptible between the prophetic and the non-prophetic in the one case, and between the Apostolic and the non-Apostolic in the other, it must be answered, that in the Old Testament the materials for judgment are limited to the later books, since the canonical Scriptures are coextensive with the entire extant literature of ancient Israel; that, even in the case of those older Scriptures, the results of criticism justify a large uncertainty as to their origin and character; and, finally, that when the competence of religious authority is at stake, confidence is destroyed when error is demonstrated.

Canonicity, moreover, as understood in the Sixth Article and boldly asserted in the Seventh, assumes the equal authority of all parts of Scripture. In the light of critical conclusions, there is an audacity about the Seventh Article which constitutes it a serviceable milestone on the roadway of thought.

"The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, Who is the only Meditator between God and Man, being both God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises." [2]

[1] Sanday, *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 254, 255.

[2] Cf. Prof. V. H. Stanton, *Cambridge Companion to the Bible*, p. 119: "It must strike every observant reader of the Old Testament that the rewards and punishments held out therein as motives to virtue and godliness relate almost solely to this present world." Cf. Driver's *Introduction*, p. 448. Speaking of a *late* book, Ecclesiastes, the author says, "It is clear that Qoheleth, as a whole, knows nothing of a future." Dr. Salmond (*Christian Doctrine of Immortality*,

It is notorious that the assumption of the equal authority of all canonical Scriptures has governed the general practice of theologians for many centuries. Proofs of doctrine have been accumulated from every part of the Bible, and prodigies of textual dove-tailing have manufactured arguments out of the most incongruous materials. This indiscriminate use of Scripture is prohibited by the criticism of the books. Once admit that those books are largely compilations, that they reflect in greater or less degree the ecclesiastical or theological or even political views of their compilers, that they superimpose upon history various interpretations of history, that the facts are manipulated in the interest of those interpretations, that large and irreconcilable disagreements on matters of fact exist between the different books, and it is manifest that the authority of the different parts of Scripture will vary almost infinitely. The common quality of canonicity will neither compel belief nor arrest rejection. And from this admission a crowd of new questions will take their origin. By what standard shall the religious authority of the several books, or parts of books, be determined? How far must demonstrated error in matters of fact impair the truth of the conception of history which the error was designed to express? What is the actual worth of prophecies inspired by the patriotic ardours of persecuted Jews in the time of the Maccabees? Canonicity may have been a fiction, but it served a useful purpose in keeping the peace. Like the "Treuga Dei" of the Middle Ages, it reconciled no quarrel, but restrained all conflict. Its repudiation involves in the sphere of interpretation the beginning of strife, which the Wise Man well says is as the letting out of water.

In the case of the New Testament, the problem is simpler in appearance, but essentially the same. Canonicity here also means nothing more than the fact of general acceptance. If, on the one hand, it must be allowed that generally the critical judgment on the books of the New Testament is far

p. 189) makes the most of the evidence, but cannot say more than this: "It may be that the O. T. has a dim and fragmentary conception of immortality. It may be *that in it, for the most part, piety has its field in this world, and faith its satisfaction in present relations to God.* It may be that it has little in the form of a doctrine of the future life. But what it has is something that was its own from the first," etc.

more favourable than that on the books of the Old, it must also be allowed, on the other hand, that at least in one case (the Second Epistle of S. Peter) the critical judgment is probably adverse, and that that one case carries with it the main contention.

"We must then, I think, distinctly contemplate the possibility, if not the probability, that we have in the New Testament a book which is not by the writer whose name it bears. What this would mean is that the New Testament is not upon a different footing to the Old; that there would be a real parallel to a case like that of Ecclesiastes, in which a book has found its way into the Canon under an assumed name. . . . For some time past there has been a sort of tacit consent, wherever criticism is admitted, to use the Second Epistle of S. Peter with a certain reserve."[1]

It would seem, therefore, that the honest interpreter of the Scriptures can no longer justify himself by the broad consideration that the writings he interprets are "canonical." He must frankly face the difficulty of determining and defending the degree of authority which he will ascribe to any specific passage of Scripture. He cannot, under pain of exegetic sterility, ignore the critical theory of the composition of the books, or shut his eyes to the circumstances which gave them their place in the Canon of Scripture. He will, in fact, proceed on the assumption that, within the sphere of interpretation, canonicity has no meaning.

2. The disappearance from the sphere of scriptural exegesis of the notion of canonicity as certifying religious worth, at once enlarges the range and modifies the character of sacred literature; the next result of criticism to which we must call attention appears to prohibit the most ancient, popular, and influential of all exegetic methods. The allegorical method of interpretation manifestly assumes the existence of a sacred text. This assumption is destroyed by textual criticism. There is no sacred text, there is a large measure of uncertainty as to the text with which the interpreter has to deal, and such security as he possesses must be gained through the painful processes of critical proof. To invalidate allegorism is from another side to disintegrate the

[1] Sanday, *Bampton Lectures*, p. 348.

Canon. It is not excessive to say that the canonical status of at least one book of the Old Testament depends on its allegorical sense. To prohibit that sense, to compel a literal treatment of the Song of Solomon, is to wake the ancient doubts as to its character, and to invest them with a new authority.

"The acceptance of this book into the Canon possibly implies a date at which allegorical interpretation—in other words, the influence of Haggadic teaching—had come into use. The Canonicity of the Song of Songs could thus be defended on other grounds besides that of its being a writing of Solomon, and in spite of the objections that were felt on account of the primarily secular character of its contents. But its reception did not pass without opposition."[1]

Moreover, the allegorical method can claim apostolic sanction. The Apostle Paul must be counted among the Allegorists, and the condemnation of his exegesis can hardly be without influence on our conception both of the inspiration of the sacred authors, and of the authority of their writings (*vid.* Gal. iii. 16, iv. 22 ff.). Allegorism has undoubtedly been in the past the favourite method of interpretation, and even in the present it obtains a wide acceptance. Biblical criticism largely provides a substitute for allegorism as an expedient devised by thoughtful men in order to reconcile the moral crudities of the Old Testament with the higher morality of the Gospel. The refinements of the Alexandrine Fathers, carrying on the exegetic tradition of Philo, are not needed by the modern student, who is at no loss for a natural explanation of the incidents and doctrines which tortured the minds of pious men in earlier times. The method devised in the interest of culture was perpetuated by the piety of ignorance. S. Gregory the Great, who in so many respects seems to inaugurate the Middle Ages, stands at the head of the Allegorists of the West. It is no mean evidence of the vitality of his influence, that the Editors of the Library of Fathers should have included the *Magna Moralia* in their translations. The half apologetic preface indicates in its opening sentences the weakness and the attraction of allegorism.

[1] Ryle, *Canon of Old Testament*, p. 198.

"The following Commentary may perhaps be regarded with the less interest by some readers, as not being founded on a critical examination of the original text. Perhaps, however, there may also be readers who are glad to have their attention withdrawn from difficulties to them insuperable, and fixed on those deep and pervading characteristics which it is the privilege of holiness to read in the sacred page. Criticism may contradict the interpretation of a sentence, and give a different turn to particulars; but the main scope of the work is founded on principles of a higher order, and involves a perception of truths to which the acutest critic may perchance be blind."

The weakness of allegorism consists in its utterly arbitrary character. "The privilege of holiness" rarely respects the boundaries of common sense; it would be an easy task to produce astonishing examples of the extravagances of such interpretations, but it would not serve any useful purpose. As a method of *interpretation*, allegorism is indefensible; but as a means of edification it will probably always justify itself at the bar of the Christian conscience. It would be difficult to improve upon this description of the popular treatment of the Scriptures at the present time, which occurs in S. Gregory's Epistle to the Metropolitan of Armenia—

"Sicut enim ex uno auro alii murenas, alii anulos, alii dextralia ad ornamentum faciunt, ita ex una scripturæ sacræ scientia expositores quique per innumeros intellectus quasi varia ornamenta componunt quæ tamen omnia ad decorem cælestis sponsæ proficiunt."[1]

Nor could the theory of allegorism be better stated than in this sentence from the same Epistle—

"Quia in intellectu sacræ scripturæ respui non debet quicquid sanæ fidei non resistit."[1]

That is to say, within orthodox limits pious fancy may run riot in the sphere of scriptural exegesis.

It may not be denied that by means of this licence of interpretation the Scriptures may be made a powerful moral influence in the general life; they draw to themselves the affections of ardent souls; they are invested with the spiritual beauty of devout imagination; they gather about them a

[1] *S. Greg. Epist.* vol. iii. No. 62.

wealth of tender and precious associations. Every student obtains from them the guidance he seeks, for they return to him his own suggestions; in the hands of the allegorist they are patient of every pious interpretation. This is much; but there is another side to the question. If the immediate gains are great, the inherent mischiefs are greater. The Scriptures which are distorted in one direction may be distorted in the other. Allegorism is an instrument which can be used by the fanatical and the unscrupulous as well as by the holy and enthusiastic. Where there are no recognised principles of interpretation, the safeguards of reason and religion are lacking, and the worst calamities are possible. Not the least service which Biblical Criticism has rendered to religion is the prohibition of fantastic, that is, ultimately of dishonest exegesis.

It cannot, however, be denied that the authority of the Scriptures is very directly affected by the prohibition of allegorising. The interest of the Bible is for the mass of believers immensely diminished, and much of the sacred text is transmuted from the food of faith into its burden. The extent of the change may be measured by contrasting the Song of Songs as understood by S. Bernard, with the same book as understood by a modern critic.

Incidentally, modern criticism has disallowed the palliatives by which pious men have attempted to maintain the inspiration of the imprecatory Psalms, and even to excuse their public use in Christian worship. The ingenious argument of the brilliant editor of *Lux Mundi* will hardly carry conviction to an unprejudiced mind. It is an interesting example of the confusion of thought which marks the transition from traditional to critical views of the Bible.

"They (*i.e.* the imprecatory Psalms) are not the utterances of vulgar spite; they are the claim which righteous Israel makes upon God that He should vindicate Himself, and let their eyes see how 'righteousness turns again unto judgment.' The claim is made in a form which belongs to an early stage of spiritual education; to a time when this life was regarded as the scene in which God must finally vindicate Himself, and when the large powers and possibilities of the Divine compassion were very imperfectly recognised.

But behind these limitations, which characterise the greater part of the Old Testament, the claim of these Psalms still remains a necessary part of the claim of the Christian soul. We must not only recognise the reality of Divine judgments in time and eternity, bodily and spiritual; we must not only acquiesce in them because they are God's: we must go on to claim of God the manifestation of His just judgment, so that holiness and joy, sin and failure, shall be seen to coincide."[1]

The reiterated attempt to find some non-natural sense for these psalms[2] sufficiently proves the severity of the strain they have imposed on the Christian conscience; but the simplest and only sufficient means of removing the difficulty, lies in the frank admission that these writings express the very dispositions which are most repugnant to the Gospel, and are therefore quite unsuited for use in the worship of the Church. There are few more melancholy spectacles than that presented by thousands of Christian congregations, engaged at frequent intervals in rehearsing before the Almighty these revolting expressions of vindictive hate; expressions which are not only painful in themselves, but which, on the lips of disciples of Jesus Christ, are positively grotesque. Criticism in forcing us to understand literally these imprecatory Psalms authorises us to withdraw from them all religious authority.

3. Allegorical interpretation is, however, only one form of arbitrary exegesis; and all arbitrary exegesis is prohibited by the secularisation of the text of Scripture which results from an acceptance of critical theory. Such prohibition works havoc in proof texts. A conspicuous example is at hand in the three famous passages on which, so far as Scripture is concerned, the vast fabric of Papal Authority has been built. Read critically, that is, naturally, what possible doubt could exist as to the sense of those passages? The unquestionable fact that the greatest interpreters of the primitive Church understood these passages quite simply, without reference to the Roman bishops, is sufficient evidence of the utter arbitrariness of the modern papal interpretations.

[1] *Lux Mundi*, p. 350, 4th edition.

[2] Bishop Perowne's note to Ps. xxxv. 22, in his *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*.

This reading back into the text of Scripture senses which reflect the opinions of subsequent times may, indeed, arise from mental infirmity, the inability to conceive circumstances wholly dissimilar from those with which one is actually familiar; but it can only be justified by the assumption that the text of Scripture is itself in such sense unique, that the ordinary canons of interpretation may in its case be set aside. The Council of Trent imposed an anathema on those who should deny that the Sacrament of Extreme Unction is described in S. Jas. v. 13, 16. But such an understanding of the passage could never justify itself to a critical student; it is but the reflection of the mediæval doctrine upon a text assumed to be lawfully subject to whatever sense the Church can read into it. It would be easy to accumulate examples of arbitrary interpretation which have had most powerful, and not rarely most sinister, influence on society, but there is no need to multiply proofs in a case so obvious. In prohibiting every kind of arbitrary exegesis, Biblical Criticism has conferred no mean benefit on mankind, by cutting one of the historic springs of fanaticism; but it has reduced the notion of "inspiration" to an inextricable confusion. It is the fashion to denounce the courageous divines who still profess their belief in "verbal inspiration," and, it must be allowed, the intellectual possibility of their position is humiliating; nevertheless, they hold the theory which not only has been common to the Christian centuries, but which still holds the field. No other theory of inspiration has yet established itself; perhaps Dr. Pusey was right in saying that no other is possible. "During the whole of my matured theological life"—he wrote in 1863—"I have held verbal inspiration; nor, since we have no clear thoughts except as embodied in words, can I imagine any other." The present Pope, when in 1893 he issued an Encyclical Letter on the Study of Holy Scripture, expressed both the conviction of his own Church and that of the mass of Christians, both in the past and at the present day, in vindicating arbitrary exegesis—

"Inasmuch as they (*i.e.* the Sacred Writings) are the work of the Holy Ghost, the words conceal a number of truths which are far surpassing the strength and penetration

of human reason—that is to say, the divine mysteries and all which belongs to them. The sense is sometimes wider and more veiled than would appear to be conveyed by the letter and by the rules of hermeneutics, and, furthermore, the literal sense itself sometimes hides other senses which serve to elucidate dogmas, or to give rules for the conduct of life."

4. The acceptance of critical theory will fundamentally affect the traditional conception of prophecy. The argument for Christianity based on the fulfilment of prophecy has from the earliest times held a prominent place in the writings of Apologists. It gives a distinctive character to the first Synoptic Gospel, and everywhere in the narrative of the Acts is said to have been urged by the Apostles. S. Justin Martyr advances it as the unanswerable proof of which even heathen must recognise the force.

"But lest any should ask us in objection, what prevents Him Whom we call Christ from being a man, of men, who performed what we call miracles (*δυνάμεις*) by magic craft, and therefore appeared to be the Son of God, we will now offer our proof (*ἀπόδειξιν*), not trusting to the words of those who affirm these things, but necessarily believing those who foretold what should happen before it came to pass, for we see with our very eyes that events have happened, and are happening, as was foretold; and this will, we think, appear, even to you, the greatest and truest proof (*ἥπερ μεγίστη καὶ ἀληθεστάτη ἀπόδειξις καὶ ὑμῖν, ὡς νομίζομεν, φανήσεται*)."[1]

S. Justin proceeds to develop his argument at some length, giving numerous examples of prophecies that have been fulfilled in the history of Christ. Of the seventy-one sections which compose the *Apology*, no less than twenty-five are filled with the case for Christianity as based on the fact of Messianic prediction. Later Apologists have followed the precedent set by S. Justin; and so strongly has the argument from prophecy laid hold of the Christian mind, that every other function of the prophets of Israel has, so to speak, been absorbed in that of predicting the advent and history of the Messiah. That the prevalent conception of prophecy identifies it with prediction is notorious. "Prophecy,"

[1] S. Justin M., *Apologia*, i. 30.

observed Bishop Butler,[1] "is nothing but the history of events before they come to pass." It must be conceded that this notion of prophecy has considerable justification. Even when large deductions have been made from the list of specific predictions which have received fulfilment in the Gospel—and such must be made by the disciple of critical theory—there still remains a marvellous parallelism between the Evangelic history and the Messiah's career as foreshadowed by the prophets. Individual prophecies must be cancelled in deference to a truer understanding of their meaning, but the general result is scarcely affected. Moreover, there is undeniable force in Bishop Butler's contention, "that the apparent completions of prophecy must be allowed to be explanatory of its meaning." The appeal to prophecy is still a most effective argument with certain minds. Probably the account which the dying Earl of Rochester gave of his conversion to Bishop Burnet, who calls it "strange," is really representative of a very common experience.

"He said, Mr. Parsons in order to his conviction read to him the 53 chapter of the Prophesie of Isaiah, and compared that with the History of our Saviour's Passion, that he might there see a Prophesie concerning it, written many ages before it was done; which the Jews that blasphemed Jesus Christ still kept in their hands, as a Book divinely inspired. He said to me, That as he heard it read, he felt an inward force upon him, which did so enlighten his mind, and convince him, that he could resist it no longer. For the words had an authority which did shoot like Raies or Beams in his mind; So that he was not only convinced by the Reasonings he had about it, which satisfied his understanding, but by a power which did so effectually constrain him, that he did ever after as firmly believe in his Saviour, as if he had seen him in the Clouds."[2]

Conceding, however, all that can be conceded, it yet remains certain that the argument from prophecy, in the traditional form, is disappearing from the front rank of

[1] *Analogy*, pt. ii. chap. vii. sec. 2.

[2] *Some Passages of the Life and Death of John Earl of Rochester*, p. 140, London, 1680. I note that Professor Cheyne has referred to this striking episode in *Isaiah*, vol. ii. p. 195, 2nd ed.

Christian evidences; that it is largely weakened in the general regard by the excessive claims made on its behalf in the past, and that it can no longer be advanced effectually except in Christian circles.

"Predictive prophecy," observes Professor Briggs, "has been made a burden to apologetics by the abuse that has been made of it by self-constituted defenders of the faith and presumptuous champions of orthodoxy. It is necessary that evangelical critics should rescue predictive prophecy from the hands of those who have made such sad mistakes." [1]

This task the professor attempts. He discusses carefully the origin, nature, limitations, and general drift of prophetic prophecy, and finds in the "Messianic Ideal" the determining principle by which it is to be interpreted. Christ is "the key of Old Testament prophecy," not because He is the object of numerous specific predictions, but because He satisfies the Ideal which slowly and unconsciously had been developed in the History of Israel by the agency of the prophets.

"Messianic prophecy of the Old Testament is an organic whole—an advancing organism culminating in the Christ of the incarnation, of the cross, and of the throne." The effects of this theory on the interpretation of the prophecies is thus stated—

"There is no double sense to Hebrew prediction. The prediction has but one sense. But inasmuch as the prediction advances from the temporal redemption of its circumstances to the eternal redemption of the Messiah, and it is part of a system of predictions in which the experience of redemption is advancing, it cannot be otherwise than that some of the elements of the predicted redemption should be realised in historical experience ere the essential element of the Messianic redemption is attained. This has induced some interpreters to speak of a successive fulfilment, or of a fulfilment in gradual approximation to the end. This is not a true representation of the facts of the case. There is but one fulfilment in the Messianic times. But all history is preparing the way and advancing toward that fulfilment. As prediction is rising in successive stages to higher and broader

[1] *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 44. [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1886.]

and more extensive views of the Messianic redemption, the history of redemption is advancing with it towards the same end. Thus we ought to expect that the Messianic ideal should be realised in some of its phases ere the ideal itself is attained, and that the later predictions should base themselves on these partial realisations. But we should not be willing to acknowledge that the predictions find their fulfilment in these historic and predictive approximations. The Messianic ideal is the one essential thing to be determined in its relation to the Messianic end." [1]

Specific predictions may not be pressed; it is even arguable that none such can be demonstrated; but the whole history of Israel is prophetic, and tends towards the goal of the Incarnation; and in proportion as the true drift and meaning of that history were realised and expressed, so did the actual life and literature of the nation foreshadow the great end towards which Israel was moving. The prophets were precisely those who saw most clearly and most deeply into the events which passed under their eyes. They were the interpreters of Israel's function in history, and therefore predictive of the result to which that function ministered. Speaking of the "circumstantial prophecies" in the Book of Psalms and in Isaiah, Professor Cheyne thus defines his own position—

"That they were conscious prophecies the writer does not suppose, and to many they will only seem accidental coincidences. It is their amount and quality which give them significance; and the full Christian explanation of them as due to Providential overruling (a 'pre-established harmony') is therefore in sole possession of the field." [2]

The belief in Messianic prediction takes for granted the Christian position; on Christian assumptions the fact of prediction is apparent, and its evidential importance considerable; but, apart from those assumptions, the fact is doubtful and improbable, and the importance slight. Critical theory prohibits the absolute statement of the fact, for the prophecies are capable of reasonable interpretation without the hypothesis of Messianic prediction in the Christian sense.

[1] *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 65.
[2] *Isaiah*, vol. ii. p. 185, 2nd ed., 1882.

But critical theory certainly tolerates that hypothesis, and the Christian, who finds its justification in his creed, is not fairly open to any critical censures for maintaining its validity.

In the absence of the notion that the prophets were before all things concerned with specific Messianic predictions, their true historical rôle has been perceived. Essentially men of their own time, they were mainly concerned with the problems, political, social, economic no less than moral and spiritual, which actually exercised the thought of their own contemporaries. They were practical statesmen and social reformers, and, in the normal sense, religious teachers as well as prophets; but prophecy, not in the narrow sense of prediction, but in the wider and nobler sense in which it stands for the communication to men of the Divine Will, is their prevailing and most lofty character.

"We must regard the prophets as they regarded themselves—as religious teachers, as messengers of Yahveh, commissioned to explain to their people the immediate purposes and mandates of their God. In the discharge of this their embassy, they now warned, now threatened, and now comforted. They read the gradual fulfilment of Yahveh's will in the events of their age, set forth the history and interpreted the lesson. But the less they were prophets by habit and profession, the more were their utterances stimulated by special crises. They prophesied because, and when, they had a definite message to discover."[1]

This conception of the prophets necessarily influences their interpretation. Before all things, it is necessary to set their prophecies in connection with the occurrences which evoked them, and the conditions of life and thought which coloured and shaped them. Obviously the first step in interpretation must be to determine the time and the circumstances of the prophecies; for in them lies the key to the sense. Criticism has done much to satisfy the need which criticism created. The dating of the prophecies has now reached a forward stage. In certain directions general agreement has been secured. The ascription of chaps. xl.–lxvi. of Isaiah to a prophet who wrote about the middle of the sixth century B.C.,

[1] Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, 1892, p. 153.

is a conspicuous example of critical agreement, as well as a striking evidence of the exegetic worth of critical achievement. The critical sentence on the Book of Daniel is equally unanimous as against the traditional theory of its authorship and date. It is thus stated by Professor Driver—

"In face of the facts presented by the Book of Daniel, the opinion that it is the work of Daniel himself cannot be sustained. Internal evidence shows, with a cogency that cannot be resisted, that it must have been written not earlier than *c.* 300 B.C., and in Palestine; and it is at least *probable* that it was composed under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, B.C. 168 or 167."[1]

That the dating of the documents must affect their interpretation, is obvious; it is not less obvious that it must affect their authority. To this point we shall return; here it suffices to note that the influence of critical theory has tended to greatly enhance the prestige of the Hebrew prophets. The interest which, for reasons we have stated below, is rapidly being withdrawn from the legal and historical books, seems to have been transferred to the prophets. The character of this interest, however, is only in part religious. In an age marked by an ardent zeal for social reform and very sensitive to political oppression, the sonorous denunciations of iniquity in which the prophetical writings abound are both attractive and serviceable. This may go some way to explain the popularity of the prophets; but their religious authority, though, as we have seen, it has largely changed its character, also appears to be increasing. Prophecy is recognised as the distinctive element in Hebrew history. The elaborate legal system is seen to be Israel's share of the common Semitic heritage; but prophecy is a thing apart, for which no real ethnic parallel can be found.

An eloquent French critic has described in glowing language what he conceives to be the secret of this tenacious hold over the modern mind which the Hebrew prophets unquestionably possess. There is truth, but surely not the whole truth, in M. Darmesteter's eulogy; we adduce it here, not only for its intrinsic interest, but also as an example of the prophetic influence of which it speaks.

[1] *Introduction to Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 467.

"Leur esprit est dans l'âme moderne. Il importe peu qu'ils aient parlé au nom d'un dieu, Jéhovah, et que l'âge moderne parle au nom de la pensée humaine ; car leur Jéhovah n'était que l'apothéose de l'âme humaine, leur propre conscience projetée au ciel. Ils ont aimé tout ce que nous aimons et rien de leur idéal n'a coûté ni à la raison ni à la conscience. Ils ont installé dans le ciel un dieu qui ne veut ni autels, ni holocaustes, ni cantiques, 'mais que le droit jaillisse comme de l'eau et la justice comme une intarissable rivière.' Ils ont fait du droit une force, de l'idée un fait devant lequel tout fait se trouble ; à force de croire à la justice, ils l'ont mise en marche dans l'histoire. Ils ont eu un cri de pitié pour tous les malheureux, de vengeance pour tous les oppresseurs, de paix et d'alliance pour tous les peuples. Ils n'ont point dit à l'homme : Ce monde ne vaut. Ils lui ont dit : Le monde est bon ; et toi aussi, sois bon, sois juste, sois pur. Ils ont dit au riche ; tu ne retiendras pas le salaire de l'ouvrier ; au juge ; tu frapperas sans humilier ; au sage ; tu es responsable pour l'âme du peuple ; et ils en ont instruit plus d'un à vivre et mourir pour le droit sans espérance des Champs-Élysées. Ils ont appris aux peuples que sans idéal 'l'avenir pend devant eux comme un haillon' ; que l'idéal seul fait vivre, et que l'idéal, ce n'est point la gloire du conquérant, ni la richesse, ni la puissance, mais de dresser, comme une lumière au milieu des nations, l'exemple de lois meilleures et de l'âme plus haute. Enfin ils ont jeté sur l'avenir, par-dessus les orages du présent, l'arc de paix d'une immense espérance ; une vision radieuse d'une humanité meilleure, plus affranchie du mal et de la mort, qui ne connaîtra plus ni guerre, ni juges iniques ; où la science divine emplira la terre comme les eaux couvrent le fond de l'Océan, et où les mères n'enfanteront plus pour une mort soudaine—Rêves de voyants, aujourd'hui rêves de savants."[1]

5. Similar to the influence which critical theory has exercised on the old Christian belief in predictive prophecy, is that which it has exercised on the kindred belief in typology. It has here also disallowed the argument in detail, but reaffirmed its main contention. The traditional conception of the origin of the Mosaic Law in a series of direct Divine

[1] *Les Prophètes d'Israel*, p. xv., Paris, 1895.

commands addressed to Israel through the lawgiver Moses, cannot any longer maintain its ground in face of the critical theory of the Pentateuch; and, with the traditional conception, must fall to the ground the assumption which authorised the attempt to trace a parallel even in the minutest detail between Levitical types and Evangelic antitypes. Nevertheless, Jesus Christ stands at the end of a long tradition of expiatory sacrifice,—not, indeed, peculiar to Israel, though certainly finding in Israel its most consistent and exalted expression,—and He truly sums up its truth and satisfies its yearning. In that sense all the ritual system, which took shape so gradually and under such various influences, was typical of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." In this case also critical theory affects drastically the interpretation of Scripture, but does not necessarily impair its authority.

6. The most serious results which an acceptance of critical theory will involve, both on the interpretation and on the authority of the Scriptures, may perhaps be perceived in the case of the legal and historical books, and in that to which we have already alluded, the case of the Book of Daniel. The critical theory as to the authorship of certain books tends to destroy their authority with the general body of readers; the critical theory as to the mode and motive of compilation tends to reduce interpretation, for purposes of popular edification, to extreme difficulty. The critical presentment of sacred history does not easily reconcile itself with a high notion of the religious value of the historical records. It is matter of fact that the advance of Biblical Criticism is steadily driving into neglect the legal and historical books; and it requires no unusual gift of prevision in order to see that, if the present conditions continue, Christianity will, within the next generation or two, practically abandon a great part of the Old Testament. We proceed to advance some justifications for these crudely stated conclusions.

(*a*) Biblical critics may be said to have reached an agreement adverse to the traditional belief as to authorship of at least five canonical books—Deuteronomy, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah xl.–lxvi., Daniel. Of the last half of the canonical Book of Isaiah we need not here speak. The prophecy makes no claim to be the work of the son of Amoz; on

the critical theory its prophetic character can scarcely be said to be affected; if this were the sole, or a typical case of critical change, there would be little reason for the apprehensions of orthodoxy. But the case is far otherwise.

"The study of Deuteronomy carries the reader into the very heart of the critical problems which arise in connection with the Old Testament."[1] These words of Dr. Driver are plainly true. The divergence between the critical and the traditional view of the authorship is nowhere more complete; the strength of the critical argument is nowhere more evident; the consequences of the critical conclusion are nowhere more serious. Deuteronomy claims in its opening words to be the work of the lawgiver; the circumstances of place and time under which the great rehearsal of the law were made are carefully stated; and the book itself is written in the first person.

"The book consists chiefly of three discourses, purporting to have been delivered by Moses in the 'Steppes' of Moab, setting forth the laws which the Israelites are to obey, and the spirit in which they are to obey them, when they are settled in the land of promise."[2]

The character of the contents adds the greatest possible gravity to the question of authorship. The lawgiver is represented not only as expounding the Law, which he had been commissioned to impose on Israel, but also as predicting with all imaginable solemnity the consequences which would attach on the one hand to obedience, on the other hand to neglect. The traditional belief in the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy might at first sight seem the condition of any acceptance of the book. Apart from the Mosaic Authorship, it might seem that this book carried the brand of forgery on its surface. These would be precipitous conclusions, but hardly either unnatural or extravagant. Whatever their character or their probability, they have been risked by the critics.

The new and, we believe, the true theory of the author-

[1] *Deuteronomy*, p. 12. "International Critical Commentary." Cf. Kittel, *History of the Hebrews*, vol. i. p. 48: "Deuteronomy can be looked on as the fixed point from which we can work both backwards and forwards."

[2] *Ibid.* p. 25.

ship of Deuteronomy is thus stated by Dr. Driver with characteristic moderation, and accompanied by a careful and (in our judgment) irresistible argument—

"The composition of Deuteronomy [must be referred to] a period considerably later than the Mosaic age. Can its date be determined more precisely? The *terminus ad quem* is not difficult to fix: it must have been written prior to the eighteenth year of King Josiah (B.C. 621), the year in which Hilkiah made his memorable discovery of the 'book of the law' in the Temple (2 Kings xxii. 8 ff.). For it is clear from the narrative of 2 Kings xxii.–xxiii. that that book must have contained Deuteronomy; for although the bare description of its contents, and of the effect produced by it upon those who heard it read (xxii. 11, 13, 19) might suit Lev. xxvi. equally with Deut. xxviii., yet the allusions to the *covenant* contained in it (xxiii. 2, 3), which refer evidently to Dt. (xxix. 1, 9, 21, 25: cf. xxvii. 26), and the fact that in the reformation based upon it Josiah carries out, step by step (2 Kings xxii. 13 ff.), the principles of Dt., leave no doubt upon the matter.

"How much earlier than B.C. 621 it may be, is more difficult to determine. The supposition that Hilkiah himself was concerned in the composition of it is not probable: for a book compiled by the high priest could hardly fail to emphasise the interests of the priestly body at Jerusalem, which Dt. does not do (xviii. 6–8). The book is stated to have been found while some repairs were being carried on in the Temple: and there is force in the argument that it could hardly have been lost during the early years of Josiah (who appears to have been throughout devoted to the service of Jehovah); but this might easily have happened during the heathen reaction under Manasseh. Hence it is probable that its composition is not later than the reign of Manasseh."[1]

Having justified this conclusion by argument, Dr. Driver proceeds to raise, and up to a point to answer, the obvious question as to the value of the book. He claims for the nameless author the privilege of ancient compilers of providing their characters with appropriate speeches. "An author,

[1] *Introduction to Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 81.

therefore, in framing discourses appropriate to Moses' situation, especially if (as is probable) the elements were provided for him by tradition, would be doing nothing inconsistent with the literary usages of his age and people."[1] This may be conceded; but it may fairly be urged that to place the inspired lawgiver's utterances on a level with the speeches in Thucydides, neither facilitates their interpretation nor establishes their religious authority. Of this the learned professor is fully aware, and he advances to the real point at issue. "It is an altogether false view of the laws in Dt. to treat them as the author's 'inventions.' Many are repeated from the Book of the Covenant; the existence of others is independently attested by the 'Law of Holiness'; others, upon intrinsic grounds, are clearly ancient." This is satisfactory so far as it goes; but does it go very far? In so far as the Deuteronomic laws can be found in less suspected documents, the Book of Deuteronomy might be considered useless; in so far as that book alone records laws, its authority (under the circumstances) might be held insufficient. But we must give Dr. Driver's words in full.

"On the whole, the laws of Dt. are unquestionably derived from *pre-existent usage;* and the object of the author is to insist upon their importance, and to supply motives for their observance. The new element in Dt. is thus not the laws, but their *parenetic setting.* Deuteronomy may be described as the *prophetic re-formulation, and adaptation to new needs, of an older legislation.* Judging from the manner in which the legislation of JE is dealt with in Dt., it is highly probable that there existed the tradition—perhaps even in a written form—of a final address delivered by Moses in the plains of Moab, to which some of the laws peculiar to Dt. were attached, as those common to it and JE are attached to the legislation at Horeb. There would be a more obvious motive for the plan followed by the author if it could be supposed that he worked thus upon a traditional basis. But be that as it may, the bulk of the laws contained in Dt. is undoubtedly far more ancient than the time of the author himself; and in dealing with them as he has done, in combining them into a manual for the guidance of the people, and providing them

[1] *Introduction to Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 84.

with hortatory introductions and comments, he cannot, in the light of the parallels that have been referred to, be held to be guilty of dishonesty or literary fraud. There is nothing in Dt. implying an interested or dishonest motive on the part of the (post-Mosaic) author; and this being so, its moral and spiritual greatness remains unimpaired; its inspired authority is in no respect less than that of any other part of the O. T. Scriptures which happens to be anonymous."

It is an obvious comment on this reasoning, that, in common experience, excellence of object and purity of motive are not accepted as adequate securities for truth. It is, at least, arguable that the author of the Forged Decretals, perhaps the most potent forgery of history, possessed both these excuses. Yet "the moral and spiritual greatness" of his work remained precisely as if he had been as vulgar a deceiver as ever was branded by the hangman. We are indeed far from suggesting that the notion of forgery can rightly be introduced in the present discussion; we but design to show the weakness of this particular argument. Moreover, it is hard to see how the pseudonymous work of the Deuteronomist can be placed on the same level of "inspired authority" as that of anonymous Scripture. Anonymity argues absolutely nothing against a document; pseudonymity creates a natural suspicion. The one needs no explanation; the other must be explained. The critics offer an explanation which is in their judgment adequate. We greatly doubt whether its adequacy will be apparent to the general body of men.

Professor Cheyne[1] heads the chapter in which he discusses the origin of Deuteronomy with the ominously suggestive phrase, "Fraud or needful illusion." It does not seem to have occurred to that acute and learned critic that in the judgment of scrupulously pious men neither "fraud" nor "needful illusion" is a satisfactory or permissible expedient for advancing the cause of Religion. There is an appearance of moral obtuseness, not to say cynicism, about the apologies which modern critics offer for the author or authors of Deuteronomy, which not unnaturally suggests the idea—in itself quite unjust—that absorption in critical studies is not favourable to sensitiveness of conscience or a

[1] *Jeremiah: His Life and Times*, chap. vii. "Men of the Bible."

high degree of religious reverence. Professor Cheyne is, indeed, exceptionally frank. The "hypothesis of forgery . . . is not to be rejected straightway on the ground of its moral repulsiveness"; nor yet "may it be scouted on the ground that it is plainly impossible to palm off a modern statute-book as ancient upon an entire nation."[1] In the case, however, of Deuteronomy, "the hypothesis is in the highest degree improbable," and "critically unnecessary." True, the author publicly stated what he knew was not true ("*Moses wrote this law*," Deut. xxxi. 9); true, he, in union with Hilkiah, encouraged the people to believe a fiction; and some might be disposed to call this "deceit"; but they would be wrong to do so. "What he practised . . . was not deceit nor delusion, but rather illusion." "To abolish polytheism and the dangerous local shrines, a new prophecy and a new lawbook, of a more efficacious character than any which had yet been seen, were clearly necessary. These were provided in the original book of Deuteronomy."[2] Professor Cheyne observes in a footnote[3] that "the credulity of theologians, when assisted by a predisposing motive, is greater on some points than that of ordinary men." He himself unconsciously provides an example of the truth of his words. It argues a truly astonishing credulity to believe that a work which had its origin in such pious fraud can retain the authority which has attached to the traditional Book of Deuteronomy; or that documents which are discussed in a spirit of such strange levity can long retain any vestige of sanctity in the general mind.[4]

A milder version of the critical theory supposes that the book had been written by a prophet during Manasseh's persecution, and actually hidden, for the sake of security, in the Temple; that the author had died, and the book been for-

[1] *Jeremiah: His Life and Times*, p. 76.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 80.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 77, note 1.

[4] Prof. Cheyne is strangely unconscious of the grotesque appearance which the notion of "inspired" illusion and perversion of fact has in plain men's view. Cf. *Aids to the Devout Study of Criticism*, pp. 23, 25, 26. He really has abandoned the Christian idea of a special inspiration in the sacred writers. *Vid. ibid.* p. 35, note, where Pindar's inspiration is ranked higher than that of the Hebrew historians. Cf. Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, 1892, p. 179: "Hilkiah seems to have thought well to give the appearance of accident to a long preconcerted design."

gotten; that its discovery by Hilkiah was a *bonâ fide* transaction; and that no one consciously advocated as Mosaic a recent production, but that the actual contents of the book, reflecting the prophetic teaching and thus appealing directly to the best elements of the nation, won for it a general acceptance.

The character of Hilkiah and Shaphan may be saved by this theory; but it is not plain that it does much to save the authority of the book, or to facilitate the expositor's task. Kittel defends with energy the procedure of the unknown author, and we are far from denying to his defence a considerable measure of success; but he goes too far when he claims Divine Authority for an expedient which, when all has been said, remains in itself essentially fraudulent.

"Have we a right to reproach him with fraud, pious or impious? May we doubt the divineness of that commission by virtue of which he called to life again the earliest heroic figure of the theocracy for the benefit of a generation which was sinking into idolatry and a false worship of Yahvé, and drawing upon the words and the spirit of the greatest lawgiver set before later times a law that was new and yet was the old Mosaic one? He knew that what was propounded was Yahvé's revelation and Moses' meaning. Had Moses looked on the author's times he could not have spoken otherwise than he makes him speak. He therefore bids Moses himself in prophetic garb lift up his voice to the generation that is gone, but with a glance at a distant future. But the harmlessness, the half-poetic character, of the garb is ensured by the almost intentional manner in which the actual state of affairs is now and again allowed to pass through."[1]

This is altogether arbitrary; effective as special pleading, but doing little to reconcile the distressed conscience. Bishop Ellicott expresses brusquely but faithfully the conclusion to which the average Christian will probably come. In view of the explicit declarations of Deuteronomy—

"It is only by literary juggling and a real misuse of words that the unknown writer can be cleared of the charge of representing his own words as the *ipsissima*

[1] *History of the Hebrews*, vol. i. pp. 65, 66, London, 1895. [Theological Translation Library.]

verba of another, or, to use plain terms, of conscious fiction."[1]

Only the Bishop does not sufficiently allow for the undeveloped morality of the age. "Conscious fiction" must not be understood to connote the same moral turpitude in the seventh century B.C. as in the nineteenth A.D. The Deuteronomist was a prophet, with as inadequate a sense of the iniquity of literary fraud as Elijah had of the duty of religious toleration. Why should the inveracity of the later prophet be regarded as more serious than the cruelty of the earlier? Deuteronomy must be judged on its merits, apart from the fiction of its Mosaic authorship; and those merits are, by universal consent, very great. Nevertheless it may be feared that the authority of the book will not, in the general mind, survive the fiction which originally conferred it.

Scarcely less important is the case of the Book of Daniel. "Whatever judgment be formed as to the composition of the book,"—Bishop Westcott[2] has observed,—"there can be no doubt that it exercised a greater influence upon the early Christian Church than any other writing of the Old Testament, while in the Gospels it is specially distinguished by the emphatic quotation of our Lord" (S. Matt. xxiv. 15).

We have quoted above Dr. Driver's statement of the critical theory of the date of this book. Professor Sanday, for reasons which appear to him irresistible, endorses that theory—

"We are obliged to conclude that the name of Daniel is only assumed, and that the real author is unknown, but that he lived under Antiochus Epiphanes, and that he wrote, as some critics would say precisely, in the early part of the year 164 B.C.[3]

Mr. Montefiore[4] describes the book in these terms—

"Here in the midst of the Maccabean uprising and the persecutions of Antiochus, an unknown writer seeks to comfort his distressed fellow-countrymen by throwing his picture of the past and the present and his hopes for the future into the form of predictions uttered by a prophet of the Captivity. With these predictions he combines a variety of romantic incidents and marvels, all tending to quicken the constancy

[1] *Christus Consummator*, p. 83.
[2] *Dict. of the Bible*, art. "Daniel."
[3] *Bampton Lectures*, p. 216.
[4] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 408.

and strengthen the faith of the persecuted and struggling Jews. He thus follows the precedents of Jonah and Ruth, but expands or improves upon his models in a manner which afterwards found wide imitation and development."

It is evident that the interpretation of the book will be vitally affected by the view taken of the narratives on the one hand and the visions on the other. The critical theory appears to deny the historical character of the first and the predictive character of the other. According to Mr. Fiske, the writer "showed a remarkable ignorance of actual history," and, indeed, "was as careless of facts as he was ignorant of details." For his narratives, however, "material may or may not have existed outside of the writer's imagination in the shape of popular tales or tradition."[1] Dr. Driver[2] allows something more. He admits the existence of Daniel, and holds that "the book rests upon a traditional basis." "Perhaps written materials were at the disposal of the author: it is, at any rate, probable that for the descriptions contained in chaps. ii.–vii. he availed himself of some work or works dealing with the history of Babylon in the sixth century B.C. These traditions are cast by the author into a literary form with a special view to the circumstances of his own time." Traditions four centuries old worked up into a historical romance for a pious purpose! This is no sufficient foundation for the interpreter who would find in the sacred text "edification, and comfort, and consolation." Criticism has impoverished the preacher by the destruction of probably the most effective "examples" of faithfulness to conscience recompensed by Divine protection which the Old Testament contains.

Not much better is the case of the prophecies or prophetic visions. The book, we are told by Mr. Bruce, "is of the apocalyptic type; that is to say, it presents what is really history under the form of prophecy uttered by a personage of great name, who lived long before the actual author's time. As such, it belongs to a class of literature much inferior to the collection of oracles uttered by the

[1] *The Jewish Scriptures*, by Amos Fiske, pp. 379, 380. London: D. Nutt, 1896.

[2] *Introduction*, p. 479.

great prophets, who ever spoke in their own name what God had revealed to their own spirit."[1] This is indirectly a denial of any true predictive character to the book. It is impossible to doubt that for ordinary men the authority of the book will on this showing be destroyed.

Of the two Sapiential books we need not speak at length. The nature of the contents in both cases makes little depend on their authorship. The Proverbs will always retain their interest so long as human nature is unaltered and the conditions of human life remain what they are. The gloomy philosophy of the Preacher will always command the interest of the melancholy, the unfortunate, and the cynical. At no time has the religious authority of these books been great; there appears no reason for thinking that the critical theory of their date and authorship will diminish it. Yet the ordinary Christian may be pardoned if he find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to recognise any Divine inspiration in a book the teaching of which, "if followed consistently, would tend directly to paralyse human effort, to stifle every impulse to self-denial or philanthropy, to kill all activity of an ennobling or unselfish kind."[2]

(*β*) The critical theory of the books themselves must next be considered. We will confine ourselves to the Pentateuch, or rather—since most students now insist on regarding the Book of Joshua as practically inseparable from the preceding books—the Hexateuch. The composite character of this work is now universally admitted. It is included in Bishop Ellicott's "rectification" of the traditional theory.[3] Moreover, the general agreement extends to its main elements. "Four different documents form the basis of the whole work, having their several characteristics of style, phraseology, etc. There is the principal Elohist (so called from his predominant use of Elohim as the name of God); the Jahvist, who prefers the name Jehovah (Jahveh); a second Elohist, whose work has been taken up by an editor, and so incorporated with that of the Jahvist that it is not always easy to distinguish them; and, lastly, the Deuteronomist. A final editor (or editors) has made use of all these materials and given them their present

[1] *Apologetics*, p. 291. [2] Driver, *Introduction*, p. 442.
[3] *Christus Comprobator*, p. 70.

form."[1] These constituents of the Hexateuch have been approximately dated. The Elohist and the Jehovist probably wrote about 830–800 B.C. The Deuteronomist with more certainty can be placed two centuries later; the author of the Priests' Code was an exile in Babylonia. The completed work was solemnly promulgated by Ezra in 444 B.C. The record of this memorable event is preserved in Neh. viii. 1 ff.: "And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the broad place that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel." "That 'the law,' thus acknowledged by the people as sacred and accepted as binding, was substantially the same as our Pentateuch, is generally admitted. With the exception of a few possibly later insertions, and of certain minor alterations due to an occasional revision of the text, 'the Torah' has probably descended to us very little changed."[2]

Between Ezra and Moses stretches a period of more than nine hundred years. How much of the Hexateuch can be traced to the "Lawgiver" himself is much debated; but there seems no good critical reason for rejecting Dr. Driver's judgment—

"It cannot be doubted that Moses was the ultimate founder of both the national and the religious life of Israel; and that he provided his people not only with at least the nucleus of a system of civil ordinances (such as would, in fact, arise directly out of his judicial functions, as described in Ex. xviii.), but also (as the necessary correlative of the primary truth that *Jehovah was the God of Israel*) with some system of ceremonial observances, designed as the expression and concomitant of the religious and ethical duties involved in the people's relation to its national God. It is reasonable to suppose that the teaching of Moses on these subjects is preserved, in its least modified form, in the Decalogue and the 'Book of the Covenant' (Ex. xx.–xxiii.). It is not, however, required . . . to conclude that the Mosaic legislation was *limited* to the subjects dealt with in Ex. xx.–xxiii.: amongst the enactments peculiar to Dt.—which tradition, as it

[1] Bishop Perowne, *Cambridge Companion to the Bible*, p. 35.
[2] Ryle, *Canon of Old Testament*, p. 83.

seems, ascribed to a later period of the Legislator's life—there are many which likewise may well have formed part of it. It is further in analogy with ancient custom to suppose that some form of *priesthood* would be established by Moses; that this priesthood would be hereditary; and that the priesthood would also inherit from their founder some traditionary lore (beyond what is contained in Ex. xx.–xxiii.) on matters of ceremonial observance. . . . The principles by which the priesthood was to be guided were laid down, it may be supposed, in outline by Moses."[1]

For the rest, the legislation recorded in the Hexateuch is the gradually accumulated result of a national history extending over nine centuries, developing constantly new needs and suggesting new standpoints and ideals, but always continuous, always tenaciously holding to original principles, and justifying innovations by the plea of loyalty to them. It may be contended, and, as we think, justly, that the interest of Christianity is sufficiently guarded by the view that ascribes to Moses the ultimate authorship of the distinctive Religion of Israel; but it cannot be disputed that something more is needed if the Hexateuch is to retain the authoritative character which it has held since its promulgation by Ezra. The Christian interpreter is reduced to despair by the more than Rabbinic refinements of the critics. Even the lucidity of Dr. Driver is inadequate to the task of presenting the critical results in an adequate *working form.* Such obscurity may be indispensible; it is not on that account any the less perplexing and inconvenient. Authority can hardly be connoted of the legislation as dissected by criticism. It cannot, for the most part, be ascribed to Divine commandment; it represents a tradition common to all Semitic peoples, and modified in Israel's case by the peculiar circumstances of the history.

The inspiration of the Hexateuch on the critical theory is indeed difficult to define; it evidently must be understood in a sense which neither certifies the truth of the history nor confers authority on the legislation.

(γ) We pass, finally, to the critical presentment of Hebrew History. Apart from all matters in dispute, the interpreter

[1] *Introduction*, pp. 144, 145.

who, on the critical theory, endeavours to expound the Bible, will be hampered by the circumstance that his authorities held a conception of the history which is false. In the case of uninspired literature this circumstance would not greatly matter. The standpoint of the author would be examined, appraised, and allowed for; but in the case of the Scriptures the difficulty is really very considerable. The Books of Chronicles are, in the judgment of the critics, historically almost worthless;[1] but they present the history of Israel from the orthodox standpoint, as well Christian as Jewish. The history of the patriarchs will serve to illustrate the formidable results upon the status of Scripture which the acceptance of critical theory will have. That history, in the judgment of Wellhausen and Kuenen, is mere fable; more cautious scholars concede a nucleus of fact beneath the mass of legend. Thus Kittel thinks that "none of the reasons alleged against the historical value of the core of the primitive history forbids our regarding the patriarchs as tribal chiefs, each of whom stood at the head of a nomad tribe, already existent and subject to himself, to which as its leader he gave the name it subsequently bore. The family histories of Genesis are thus simply the form in which the events of a far distant past were preserved in the popular tradition of later generations. But in that tradition there survives matter which, though not historical in its every feature, must be held genuinely such in a number of essential leading points."[2] Kittel argues with great force that "the patriarchal period, especially that of Abraham, must be regarded as the necessary presupposition for the Mosaic period," and that, therefore, "the person of Abraham rests on a historical background." The intercourse with Egypt which marked the patriarchal period is also admitted to be historical. The Exodus is unquestionably a fact, and it authenticates the main lines of the preceding history. This might be sufficient for purposes of "Christian evidence," but is it sufficient to preserve to the Scripture its popular interest and religious

[1] Cf. Cheyne, *Aids to Devout Study of Criticism*, p. 23: "Though fully inspired as a religious teacher of his own time, and a worthy representative of the Jewish Church, it is only in some outlying part of his (*i.e.* the Chronicler's) work that he can safely be followed in statements of facts unsupported by the earlier books."

[2] *History of the Hebrews*, vol. i. p. 170.

authority? Of all the sacred narratives, perhaps that of Joseph is the most attractive. As a specimen of narrative, indeed, it could not be surpassed. In Christian circles a specially sacred character has attached to a record which has seemed prophetic of Christ. Kittel tells us that "recent authors have with good reason shown an inclination to recognise in the history of Joseph a more than ordinary number of historical reminiscences"; yet what does it all amount to?

The history is transformed beyond recognition.

"It need hardly be said that the history of Joseph is not to be taken as a mere record of family history. When he emigrated into Egypt his tribesmen were certainly with him, and we shall doubtless be justified in regarding his immigration and that of his tribe as precisely parallel to the movements of other Semitic tribes, known to us from the tombs of Beni-Hassan and elsewhere, who made their way into the Nile Valley. It is impossible to state definitely the cause of Joseph's migration. The most obvious supposition, according both with the idea of the family history and the characteristics of nomad tribes, is a disagreement with the other Abrahamic tribes which compelled Joseph to turn southwards. Perhaps we should not go far wrong in ascribing the flight into Egypt to undeserved hostility and treachery practised by his brother-tribes against Joseph. In any case, we may hold to this as a settled and historical feature of the tradition: the tribe of Joseph, driven out by the rest, reached Egypt in a mean position, made its way there to power and dignity, drew the brother-tribes after it, and then gained the leadership over them."

It requires very little knowledge of the conditions under which the mass of men think and argue, to perceive that this version of the patriarch's history (whether true or not, and assuredly its truth is not easily demonstrated) is all one with a denial of the historical character of the record. Popular interpretation is out of the question; the book quickly falls into the background of Church life. Bishop Blomfield's acuteness was not at fault when he argued that the critical presentment of Biblical History would make it "impossible to employ it even as a lesson-book for the instruction of the

young."[1] This is not necessarily an argument against the truth of that view of the history, but it is from the ecclesiastical standpoint a practical difficulty of the first magnitude.

Hitherto we have spoken solely of the Old Testament, since it is in the critical treatment of the Old Testament that the most violent breach with Christian tradition is required by the critics; but it would be a grave mistake to suppose that because the traditional belief as to the date and authorship of most of the New Testament documents has been confirmed by criticism, therefore the application of critical methods has not affected, and will not affect, both the interpretation and the authority of the documents themselves. The Second Epistle of S. Peter has been already mentioned. A far more important example is that of the Fourth Gospel. Here, if anywhere, tradition has vanquished the critics; or rather the sober criticism which declined lightly or speedily to resign views sanctioned by unbroken acceptance from the sub-apostolic age has been generally recognised as, in the main, more faithful to the facts than the arbitrary criticism of innovation. The Bampton Lecturer in 1890 certainly did not understate the extent of the orthodox victory; yet in his concluding discourse he admitted, as the outcome of the critical labours and conflicts of the century, a conception of the Gospel which may be orthodox but is certainly not traditional—

"The more the Gospel is read and studied, the more the feeling asserts itself that we are touching an altogether different circle of expressions, constructions, and even modes of thought, from that with which we are familiar in the Synoptic Gospels; and that, while the discourses differ from those of the Synoptics, they agree with the style of the Author of the Gospel as we find it in the narrative portions and in the First Johannine Epistle, and even with that of John Baptist and other persons who are introduced as speakers." Archdeacon Watkins proposed as a satisfactory explanation the fact of *translation*, which he explains in this way—

"I mean translation in language from Aramaic into Greek; translation in time extending over more than half a

[1] *Old Testament and New Criticism*, p. 120.

century, the writer passing from young manhood to mature old age; translation in place, from Palestine to Ephesus; translation in outward moulds of thought, from the simplicity of Jewish fishermen and peasants, or the ritual of Pharisees and priests, to the technicalities of a people who had formed for a century the meeting-ground, and in part the union, of the philosophies of East and West."

In fact, we have in the Fourth Gospel paraphrases of Christ's words and inferences from them, rather than the words themselves. S. John is the Deuteronomist of the New Testament. The Evangelic tradition has been subjected to a process of "development and evolution."[1] Can it be maintained that this view does not necessarily affect the interpretation of the book? Where is the orthodox interpreter who has not proceeded on the assumption that every discourse ascribed to Christ in the Fourth Gospel represents, as faithfully as the conditions of human witness permit, His *ipsissima verba?* Bishop Westcott[2] allows that the discourses ascribed to our Lord by S. John are "compressed," and "compression involves adaptation of phraseology." The Bishop is fully conscious of the consequences of his admission, but he does not shrink from them.

"When once we realise the inevitable conditions of condensation, we find ourselves constrained to trust (in this case as in others) to the insight and power of him who selects, arranges, emphasises words which are in his judgment best suited to convey the proportionate impression of discourses which he apprehends in their totality.

[1] Cf. *Lux Mundi*, p. 347: "In S. John's Gospel, for example, we have an account of our Lord which has obviously passed through the medium of a most remarkable personality. We have the outcome of the meditation, as well as the recollection of the Apostle. But, as the evidence assures us that the Gospel is really S. John's, so the Church unhesitatingly accepts *S. John's strong and repeated asseveration that he is interpreting and not distorting* the record, the personality, the claims of Jesus Christ, 'he bears record, and his record is true.'"

Where S. John makes any such repeated asseveration I do not know. His Gospel claims to relate facts and utterances, not interpretations and meditations. These last may be most valuable, but not even an Apostle's comments and thoughts can really take rank as Words of Christ. The distinction becomes so gravely important in view of the startling difference between the speeches of Christ in the Fourth Gospel and those in the Synoptics. Honest exegesis must face the fact, and allow for it.

[2] *S. John*, Introduction, p. lvi.

"Thus the question finally is, not whether S. John has used his own style and language in summarising the Lord's teaching, but whether he was capable of so entering into it as to choose the best possible method of reproducing its substance. It may or may not be the case that the particular words, in this sentence or that, are his own. We are only concerned to know whether, under the circumstances, these were the words fitted to gather into a brief space and to convey to us the meaning of the Lord. We may admit, then, that S. John has recorded the Lord's discourses with 'freedom.' But freedom is the exact reverse of arbitrariness, and the phrase in this connection can only mean that the Evangelist, standing in absolute sympathy with the thoughts, has brought them within the compass of his record in the form which was truest to the idea."

Whether this explanation is as sufficient as the Bishop thinks, we have not here to inquire. Our purpose is fulfilled when we have pointed out that the interpretation, and even the authority, of the Fourth Gospel ought to be affected by a theory so suggestive and far-reaching. It may be permitted to observe that in his profound and luminous commentary the Bishop invariably treats the discourses as Christ's, both in word and in substance.

The acceptance of the critical theory of the Old Testament involves consequences which affect the New. The older Scriptures are continually referred to, both in the Gospels and in the Epistles.

It is computed that "our Blessed Lord either cites or refers to passages in the Old Testament Scriptures probably more than four hundred times"; these citations and references assume, or, at least, do not question, the truth of the critically most objectionable incidents of Old Testament history (*e.g.* the Flood, and the swallowing of Jonah by the great fish), and the traditional authorship of the Book of Daniel.[1] It is quite evident that—so far as the evidence

[1] Bp. Ellicott's little book, *Christus Comprobator*, proceeds on the assumption that the orthodox notion of our Blessed Lord's Humanity is, in such sense, true, that any critical conclusions which do not accord with it must be rejected as *ipso facto* demonstrated to be false. This assumption appears to us unnecessary, unwarrantable, and in the highest degree unsafe.

goes—our Lord accepted the view of the canonical Scriptures current in His time; if that view be demonstrated to be untenable, it would seem evident that the fact must affect, and that seriously, our notion of the *Kenôsis* involved by the Incarnation. The contrary view, that Christ's apparent acceptance of the current tradition ought to invalidate in advance every conclusion of critical effort which does not endorse that tradition (which is really all one with a total prohibition of critical effort, wherever the authority of Christ can be pleaded), does not seem for one moment tenable. Critical conclusions may range in authority from a slight probability to a complete demonstration; but so far as they go they must command the acceptance of reasoning men. The conceptions which men may form about the supreme Mystery of the Incarnation can but be precarious and inadequate at best, deducible from the actual facts of the Evangelic History. The value of any conception must be contingent on its fidelity to all the facts. That our Lord accepted, apparently without question, a view of the Old Testament which, assuming the soundness of the critical judgments, we know to be in many respects defective, is a fact of the greatest significance, the exclusion of which must vitiate any theological doctrine as to the conditions of the Incarnation.

In the Epistles the references to the Old Testament are also numerous. It will suffice to refer to the arguments which S. Paul advances in the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. It is evident that he stands absolutely with his own generation in his view of the Scriptures. In so far as critical theory destroys the validity of his reasoning, it ought to affect the interpretation of his writings.

In the main, the documents of the New Testament are not likely to be reduced in authority by the progress of critical studies. The general effect has hitherto been in the other direction. No apocryphal Christian writing can make out a strong case for admission to the Canon. The transition from the Apostolic to the sub-Apostolic age is nowhere more sharply marked than in the quality of literature. The inferiority of the writings of the "Apostolic Fathers" to those of the Apostles can scarcely be too strongly expressed. The

two sets of documents must be placed in different categories. Criticism has emphasised the distinction, and so far strengthened the supremacy of the canonical books.

There is, perhaps, a natural tendency on the part of devout Christians to ascribe an excessive gravity to the diminution, both in religious use and in religious authority, which, we have argued, must be the result upon the Old Testament Scriptures of an acceptance of critical theory. But fear of probable consequences is no sufficient reason for rejecting the claim of truth to the acceptance of honest men. The fortunes of Christianity cannot depend upon error, however ancient, and, as it may seem, morally serviceable; and when all allowances have been made on the score of critical extravagance, and what can only be described as anti-traditional bigotry, there still remains a solid residiuum of critical conclusions which can only be rejected at the cost of intellectual self-respect. These conclusions will, unless our estimate of their probable effects is entirely mistaken, tend to drive the older Hebrew Scriptures out of public use in church and school, by rendering the difficulty of edifying exegesis practically insurmountable; they will also lower the religious authority of some of the books. The lowered status of the Old Testament, however, will not necessarily involve injury to Christianity. Paradoxical though it may seem, it is notwithstanding true, that criticism, in largely secularising the literature, has only brought out into more luminous prominence the uniqueness of the History, of which that literature is at once the witness and the commentary. So long as the Old Testament held a position of independent authority, a sacred volume which might not without impiety be scientifically studied, the spiritual function of which completely absorbed every other, the Christian student failed to perceive the real character of that long course of historical development which reached its climax in the advent of Jesus Christ. The inspired volume is replaced by the inspired nation; the literature ceases to be miraculous in order to report and interpret the more faithfully a truly miraculous process. The words which in the Fourth Gospel are attributed to our Lord lose none of their truth. The Scriptures which record the life of Israel, and express the movement of Israel's re-

ligious thought, do truly "bear witness" of Christ; for the Life and teaching of Christ form the true and natural climax of Israel's life and thought.

Moreover, the diversion of attention away from the Old Testament, and the centring everything on the Gospel itself, seems to us a result from which Christianity can gather nothing but advantage. In the early days of the Church, and especially among the Jews and their proselytes, the argument from the Old Testament to Christ may have had great value, but now it is otherwise. It is not the Old Testament that leads men to faith in Christ, but faith in Christ that leads men to the Old Testament. The central truth of Christianity justifies itself to the believer; the secret of the unrelaxed hold upon the Christian conscience which the New Testament possesses is the intense conviction of Christ's personal contact with human souls which glows in its pages. In measure as consciences are distressed by the sense of sin, the peace of "reconcilation" will demonstrate the reality of the Atonement; in measure as men take in hand the conflict with sin, the inspiration of Christ's example and the power of Christ's grace will affirm by the unanswerable evidence of actual experience the fact of His Resurrection. Christ's words have perpetual verification: "There is no man which shall do a mighty work in My Name, and be able quickly to speak evil of Me" (S. Mark ix. 39). If the worst fears of orthodoxy were realised, and the Old Testament (which assuredly will never be the case) were cast aside as spiritually worthless, is it necessary to conclude that the foundations of Christianity have given way, and Christianity itself is irretrievably ruined? What *are* the foundations of Christianity? In the last resort, what induces discipleship? Is it not still, as formerly, the appeal of the living Person to the conscience, and the answer back of the conscience in recognition and homage? What have the literary fortunes of the sacred writings to do with the facts of Christian experience? Even if, in the first instance, the writings seemed to be the agents which led the disciple to Christ, must not the effect of discipleship be to throw them into the background in order that prominence may be given to another and more authoritative testimony? So the Samaritans who first were brought to Christ by the woman's

witness disdained to base their faith on that foundation when they had personal experience of our Lord. "They said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (S. John iv. 42).

Moreover, Christianity stands to gain as well as to lose from the acceptance of the results of criticism. From the earliest times the morality of the Old Testament has been a popular stumbling-block; and, so long as the traditional view is paramount, such it will continue to be. The critical theory of the history and literature of Israel at least removes this particular difficulty from the way of discipleship. If some canonical books, stripped of an artificial spirituality, are reduced to their proper insignificance, others, set free from an arbitrary disqualification, are frankly given the place due to their merits. Who would not gladly exchange the Song of Songs, or the Book of Esther, or the history of Jonah, for the Book of Wisdom, or even Ecclesiasticus? The reduction of Israelite history into the general category of human history is not altogether without compensating advantage. The miraculous narratives may have helped faith in rude and superstitious ages, but they are now, perhaps, more often felt to be a sore burden to the human mind. If critical theory should even insist on purging the history of its miraculous episodes, would it not, for many, facilitate acceptance of Christianity by removing a difficulty equally formidable and (so far as the essence of religion is concerned) superfluous? The new prominence assigned to the prophets fixes attention on the noblest element of Israel's history. Finally, the accurate study of the conditions under which the prophets lived and taught has added fresh interest to the study of their writings. Indeed, is it excessive to say that what criticism has withdrawn from the Hexateuch it has restored with interest to the Prophecies?

The changes we have indicated as probable may well at first view have a shocking and quite intolerable aspect to English Christians, bred from the cradle to venerate the Bible in its traditional form; it is possible, perhaps even probable, that the general repugnance will be too strong for the contentions of the critics, so that an uncritical, that is, an un-

reasonable, theory of inspiration will become a condition of Christianity so far as the Churches and denominations of Christendom can secure that result. The Roman Church has adopted that course already; it is but too evident that among Anglicans there are not a few who are prepared, in the service of what is called "orthodoxy," to follow the Roman precedent. The traditional piety of the religious rank and file in England naturally predisposes them to resent any view of Scripture which tends to shake its infallibility. There can be no doubt that if once the multitude of English Christians realised the character and drift of the new theories, they would manifest a spirit of intractable conservatism. The reflective Christian, however, will remember that Christianity has shown itself equal to similar crises before. That morality could be maintained without the penitential system, or that religion could survive the repudiation of the Sacrament of the Mass, would have seemed not less plainly impossible to the Mediæval Churchman than does the continuance of Christian Belief apart from a coherent doctrine of Biblical inspiration seem to the modern Christian. History may perhaps justify the expectation that in this case, as in former cases, Christianity will prove itself more inherently vigorous than its loyal but timid professors have supposed.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S CHARGE

[*February* 1899]

The Archbishop's Charge appeared at a time of much religious disturbance, and it was composed professedly with a view to mitigating and, if possible, terminating that disturbance. This purpose has determined both the substance and the form of the composition. With characteristic honesty the Primate disdains to confuse issues: he elects the capital subjects of dispute; and, in spite of the risks of misconception,—which might well have daunted a less courageous man,—he speaks frankly and plainly. It must be conceded by all that Dr. Temple has chosen the real issues in dispute. The conflict has always raged, and is now raging, about one or other of the subjects dealt with in the Charge—the doctrine of the Eucharist, the Proper Objects of Worship and Prayers for the Dead, the Practice of Confession, Uniformity in Ceremonial, the Power of the Bishops. The singular impressiveness of the Charge arises in no slight measure from the fact that it evidently does face the problem, and makes no attempt to avoid the real issues. The Archbishop wrote in the interest of "peace, quietness, and charity"; it was before all things necessary to secure audience and make his meaning clear. The excitement of the crisis assured the first; the short, almost laconic, style, at once impressive and lucid, effected the last. Perhaps for the first time the Visitation Charge of an Archbishop of Canterbury was eagerly studied by the multitudes of the Middle Classes. Undoubtedly the author has made a bold claim and risked a great venture. No one can read the Charge without being struck by the tone of authority which pervades it. The Primate speaks in the name of the Church of England, and categorically declares

what the Church teaches, what she tolerates, and what she prohibits, on the questions under discussion. Without doubt this is a new departure, and it requires justification. Such justification is amply provided by two circumstances, the necessity of the crisis and the method of the Charge. There are times when the worst friends of the Constitution are the firmest advocates of law. The freeest of Republics may need the services of a dictator; and though History declares with no hesitating voice the risks of dictatorship, it declares no less clearly its necessity as a barrier to anarchy. The Archbishop of Canterbury, marked out for the task not merely by his official rank as the titular head of the hierarchy, but also by his personal position as, by general consent, the most respected prelate on the bench, rose to the occasion, and came forward as an Ecclesiastical Dictator. Men were in confusion as to the teaching and practice of the Church; serious consequences threatened to result from the fact; passions were becoming inflamed; there was a prospect that the crisis might get altogether out of hand. At this juncture a man was needed who could speak with the combined authority of place and character, who could speak so that the nation would listen; who, in the midst of partisan clamour, could rise above party interests and commend his utterances, by their evident justice, to the acceptance of all men of good will. There was one man, and only one, who could even hope to match this need; and that man, happily for the Church, was seated on its principal Throne; and, to his lasting credit, Archbishop Temple did not flinch from the duty thus imposed on him. The method of the Charge is not less notable than its tone. It takes account of all the constitutive formularies of the National Church; it avoids all invidious phraseology, and evidently makes the Prayer-Book the rule of its language. No one can complain that the Primate acts unfairly by the documents. The only assumption that he makes is that the National Church has an attitude, a mind of its own, a reasonable positive teaching; he discards the convenient and popular fiction of a Church which is a mere compromise, a bundle of contradictions cemented together by material interests, pledging its ministers to the "Calvinist Articles," and imposing on its congregations a "Popish"

Liturgy. Those who regard the Church as a half-reformed Protestant body, and those who regard it as a half-protestantised section of the Roman Obedience, will find the Charge unpalatable, unserviceable, and unmeaning. These will find their views better expressed by the competing agitators who have given a transitory religious importance to the Albert Hall and Holborn; but those who take a more grave and worthy view of the National Church will find, in the measured yet decisive language of Archbishop Temple, valuable teaching on difficult points, and wise guidance as to many practical matters.

I turn now to the Charge itself, and notice a few of the more conspicuous or least acceptable (as experience has suggested) statements.

1. The Archbishop, in treating of the Doctrine of the Eucharist, begins by establishing the fundamental distinction between that which asserts and that which denies the reality and uniqueness of the Sacramental Gift. The former, which he further describes as that which was "universal in the writings of the early Christians," and "as still maintained by the Greek and other Churches in the East, by the Romans and by the Lutherans" (p. 8), is unquestionably the doctrine of the Church of England. The merely commemorative doctrine of the Eucharist is specifically declared to be incompatible with the English Formularies. He then advances to consider the divisions of opinion which part those who agree in believing in the uniqueness and reality of the Eucharistic Gift. Two questions are proposed. When is this Gift bestowed on the individual communicant? and the answer is again categorical and clear. "It is bestowed on the communicant when he receives the consecrated elements." When does the Congregation in which the Holy Eucharist is celebrated receive it, not as individuals but as a congregation? This question raises "the dispute concerning the Real Presence." The paragraphs of the Charge which follow have been the most severely criticised of the whole, but without adequate cause. The Archbishop propounds the doctrine of Hooker as unquestionably that of the Church. "The Church certainly teaches Hooker's doctrine, but to this it must be added that the Church nowhere forbids the further doctrine that there

is a Real Presence in some way attached to the elements at the time of consecration and before the reception." The language of the Articles and the Prayer-Book is "entirely satisfied" by Hooker's doctrine; but that language "does not exclude altogether the other opinion, namely, that in some mysterious way there is a presence attached to the elements from the moment of their consecration." The Archbishop points out that the Privy Council "refused to condemn" the language of Mr Bennett of Frome, and adds that it is difficult, if not impossible, really to distinguish between this doctrine and the Lutheran doctrine commonly called Consubstantiation."

After dismissing with decision the Roman Doctrine of Transubstantiation, the Archbishop reverts to the permitted Anglican theory of the Real Presence. "The Church of England permits—it cannot be said that it anywhere teaches, but it permits—the teaching of what it is hard to distinguish from the Lutheran doctrine; but there it stops, and no man is allowed to teach anything that goes beyond that." It is certain that nothing in the Charge has so much offended all parties as the Archbishop's attitude towards the Lutheran doctrine of the Eucharist. Protestants have not been induced by the kindly references to a Protestant Church to accept the implied concession that the Real Presence is compatible with the Anglican formularies. "Catholics" have refused the concession in disgust of the suggestion that they stand in the matter of Eucharistic doctrine with the Protagonist of Protestantism. I cannot avoid the suspicion that the Primate indulged his sense of humour when he thus rebuked the unmanageable pretensions of the rival fanatics; and, personally, I thank him for a very interesting and suggestive parallel; nevertheless, I regret his reference to Lutheranism since it has given so much offence, and played so conveniently the game of disloyalty. Yet, if fairly considered, the Archbishop says nothing which is not capable of reasonable explanation, nothing which ought to offend an Anglican Believer in the Real Presence. I suppose we may take it that by the Lutheran doctrine we are intended to understand, not the current teaching of the Lutheran Church, but the doctrine of Luther himself. The former, I

admit, cannot be fairly attributed to the High Church Party or any section of it; but the latter, so far as I understand it, is, as the Archbishop says, "hard to distinguish from" the Anglican doctrine as stated, for instance, by Canon Mason. I notice that Mr. Strong, in his ill-balanced, but in many respects excellent, *Manual of Theology*, has no fault to find with Luther's doctrine; while Canon Mason explicitly rejects as inadequate the doctrine of a "Spiritual Presence," which, according to Bishop Harold Browne, was the doctrine both of the primitive Fathers and of the greatest divines of the Church of England. It seems to me affectation, or worse, to object to the Lutheran Name, when we are, in any particular, adopting the Lutheran attitude.

Before passing away from the Archbishop's treatment of the Eucharist, I must notice some observations on p. 15 which, to my knowledge, have given offence to some good people. "It is allowed to a man to adore Christ present in the Sacrament if he believes Him to be there present; but it is not allowed to any one to use any other external mark of adoration except that of kneeling to receive the consecrated Elements. The priest is not allowed to elevate the Elements before the people, lest, perchance, they should be tempted to worship those Elements, and not only Christ Himself,—a temptation to which the well-known case of Mr. Bennett shows that man may easily be liable." It is objected that a man is free to adopt what attitude of reverence may best express and assist his own devotion. I think that we are entitled to read the whole passage as directed to the conduct, not of the private individual, but of the officiating priest. So understood, the objection seems irrelevant. The Archbishop does not concern himself with the worshippers in their seats, but only with the Priest. He disallows those crouchings and prostrations which are not unknown within the Altar-rails, and which strike even the friendly observer as excessive, or grotesque, or actually ludicrous.

2. I shall not stop over that part of the Charge which deals with the "Proper Objects of Worship and Prayers for the Dead," except to notice the bold and far-reaching principle asserted on p. 15. "The worship of the Saints prevailed in the Church for many centuries; but the Church has a right

to learn by experience, and experience has shown that the practice is dangerous, and that our Church is therefore justified in returning to the usages of the Apostles and of the Apostolic age, when such practices were unknown." If that principle, which surely is both reasonable and just, were but borne in mind, how much fanaticism would die a natural death, and what weary masses of irrelevant argumentation and curious learning would pass at last to deserved oblivion!

3. To my thinking, the most important chapter of the Charge is that which deals with "the Practice of Confession." In reading it, I think, two things must be remembered. On the one hand, a distinction must be made between the Archbishop's expressions of opinion and his enunciation of the Law of the English Church. On the other hand, due allowance must be made for the Archbishop's position. He speaks throughout rather as a Church Governor laying down the principles of pastoral action, than as a Pastor of Souls actually applying those principles to the complex and difficult problems of the soul. The extreme and urgent importance of this subject must be my excuse for asking you to follow somewhat closely the Archbishop's language. He begins by describing the præ-Reformation Confessional, and pointing out its grave mischiefs. Four characteristics of the mediæval system are selected and discussed. In the first place, confessions were *compulsory*. I may observe in passing that the compulsory nature of Roman confessions was recently denied in the columns of the *Times;* but that compulsory confession is the rule of the Roman Church cannot be seriously denied, although it may readily be conceded that the application of the rule may be so lax that individual Roman Catholics are often unconscious of any burden. Archbishop Peckham's Constitutions of 1281 are known to find favour with some Anglicans. Here is one of them which sufficiently exhibits the mediæval system. "Let parish priests beware that they give not the Body of the Lord to any that have not evidence of their having confessed by testimonial, or other credible assurance; and we lay the stress of the proof upon the oath of him that is to receive the Sacrament, who is to take care of what concerns his salvation." The Archbishop points out, in a few pregnant sentences, the inherent evils of

compulsion in the sphere of spiritual obligation. Next, the Confession exacted by authority was required to be *complete*, and from this circumstance followed quickly and inevitably the consequence of falsehood. This, I may observe, is matter of fact and experience. There is a mass of painful legislation on the point. Deadly and shameful sins are constantly concealed, and the whole life tainted with hypocrisy by the very agency (such is the irony of human fate) which claims pre-eminently to be the antidote of sin. The evidence for this is overwhelming; the Archbishop does not overstate the fact, or exaggerate its mischievous consequences. Thirdly, the Confession, thus compulsory and detailed, necessarily became *inquisitorial*. It pushed disastrous interference into "the sacred privacy of domestic life." The intense feeling on the Continent against the Roman priesthood is an evidence of the reality of this risk. The vehemence of Protestant prejudice in England on the subject reflects the same fact. It is notorious that the Confessional was constantly used as a means of getting information. The Jesuits used it as a political machine; in Ireland it has been so used in recent years. The Archbishop points to the connection (almost inevitable, and historically constant) between the duty to confess everything and the priest's right to satisfy himself that he knows everything. This means interrogation in the Confessional, and — wherever penitent and priest are not sincere, or where one or other of them is carnal and curious— the most terrible evils ensue. The standing problem of the Roman Church has been to prevent the Confessional from outraging decency. This is a very mild summary of the history, as you may find it set out, with immense knowledge, in Mr. Lee's volumes. Lastly, the priest's Absolution was always tending to take an *absolute character*. "The penitent will get forgiveness from the priest on far easier terms than from his own conscience" (p. 20). This system, then, compulsory, detailed, inquisitorial, mechanical, the Archbishop says, "entirely disappeared at the Reformation." He proceeds to state the present law of the Church, and here again he notes four features of the Anglican system. Confession must be "altogether and always voluntary." "No compulsion, direct or indirect, is ever allowed. No priest has a right to

require Confession as a condition of being presented for Confirmation or being admitted to Holy Communion. To claim such a power is a usurpation to be resisted in every way." This language is evidently chosen with direct reference to the popular complaint that the Confessional has been taking a coercive shape in many churches. I am aware that the clergy, who most provoke this complaint by their constant insistence on the duty of Confession, are very forward in repudiating the idea of compulsion; but I think they are not acting fairly by the public in so doing. Compulsion may be "direct" or "indirect," as the Archbishop indicates. It is no merit in an English clergyman to abstain from the first, since by no possibility can he exercise it; the last is but too often exerted by clergymen who, perhaps, hardly realise the extent of coercion implied in their free use of personal influence on persons whose tender years, or dependent position, or simplicity, or superstition, render them quite unable to resist the clergyman's wishes. Next, in the Anglican Church, Confession will not be complete but special, directed to the relief of particular trouble, whether of conscience or mind, not to the thorough and systematic purging of remembered sins. "The English Church," says the Archbishop, "gives the minister no power to demand that the penitent shall confess anything more than the matter which perplexes or troubles him. The minister has no right to demand complete confession of all his faults; and if he makes such a demand he does it without authority from the Church in which he is an officer" (p. 23). The permission to choose another Confessor than the parish priest is adduced as a protection for the penitent against attempted breaches of this rule. Here, clearly, the Archbishop disallows all those painful and futile devices for quickening the memory and equipping the penitent for his approach to the Confessional with elaborate lists of trivial offences, which certainly never did, and never ought to, burden any well-ordered Christian conscience. A holocaust of penitential manuals would be an enormous benefit to the cause of private Confession in the Church of England. It is obvious that, if the penitent is not properly required to confess any sin save only that which really distresses his conscience, and so disturbs him that he

cannot with a calm mind approach the Holy Communion, then the roots of the mediæval inquisitiveness are cut, and, by a natural inference, the mediæval disturbance of domestic relationships is avoided. Nor do I think anything is really lost by frankly accepting the Archbishop's version of Anglican doctrine in this matter. The crucial test of a good confession is always precisely this circumstance, whether or not *the sin which troubles the conscience* has been confessed. Confessing other sins does little good, and may do much harm. At best it is never spontaneous; and that which is laboured quickly becomes unreal; and in the moral sphere unreality is near kin to hypocrisy. Again, since the Confession is both voluntary and special, it will normally be occasional, and the Prayer-Book makes that assumption. "It is obvious," remarks the Archbishop, "that a confession voluntary made under pressure of perplexity and trouble is a very different thing from confession as a regular custom enforced with heavy sanctions." Finally, the Absolution is provisional, not final. "This assurance," says the Charge, "is like the decision of an inferior court—it may be overruled in the court above, but nevertheless it is of value as far as it goes, and the man may trust it and act upon it for the present emergency." Objection has been taken in some quarters to this account of the Sentence of Absolution, but surely with no sufficient reason. The famous formula in the "Visitation of the Sick" indicates not obscurely the truth which the Archbishop asserts. "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him," etc. Two conditions are here laid down—faith and repentance—on which the pardon of God depends, and *a fortiori* the validity of the priest's declaration of that pardon, and neither of them is within the cognisance of the wisest and holiest Confessor. Even in the Confessional the saying holds that "man looketh at the outward appearance." Hypocrites frequent the Confessional as readily as the hearer's seat or the Communion rail. The finality of the Absolution, even of a genuine penitent, is conditioned by his own perseverance, and that neither he himself nor his Confessor can foresee. Surely our Lord taught the provisional character of Absolution in the parable of that

unmerciful servant who was indeed forgiven, but whose forgiveness was afterwards cancelled because of his own hardness. Personally I am grateful for the Archbishop's simile; it helps to make a little clearer what must be still very obscure. I apprehend that the honest penitent can, and ought to, accept the priest's Absolution as a Divine assurance of present forgiveness, and an authoritative sentence opening to him the approach to Holy Communion; but forgiveness does not depend on the absolving word; it follows immediately on true penitence; the priest's sentence declares on earth an accomplished fact of the unseen world. The Archbishop recognises that there are some who find private Confession spiritually helpful, and frankly concedes their liberty in this respect, but he leaves no doubt as to his dislike and suspicion of the regular use of the Confessional.

I have already reminded you that the Archbishop speaks not primarily as a pastor, but as a Governour. The pastor's performance of duty must undoubtedly be guided by the broad principles established by authority, but he certainly must reckon with other circumstances than those with which the Charge properly dealt. Thus the pastor must instruct his people about that confession which the Archbishop affirms to be always permissible, and sometimes highly requisite. It must imply a serious failure of pastoral duty that the multitude of English laity are ignorant of a discipline which Christ, at least in principle, instituted, and which the clergy are solemnly charged to administer. Further, the pastor must exhort to the due performance of duties which are voluntary and occasional. That Confession, like Almsgiving and Fasting, owes all its worth to its voluntary character, by no means exonerates the pastor from his task of stirring up his people to consider their duty with regard to it. Moreover, the pastor must counsel individuals. He is set to watch for souls; he is charged to warn the wicked; and God will call him to terrible reckoning for unfaithfulness. He is bound to press Confession on those whom he honestly judges to need that discipline, just as he is honestly bound to press total abstinence on those whom he sees to need it. Neither is an universal obligation; both may be, and often are, necessary unto salvation.

4. The Archbishop's treatment of "Uniformity in Ceremonial" is a remarkable example of sane and balanced judgment. The subject was the most thorny of all touched by the Charge, and every syllable could count on the anxious, jealous, rigorous criticism of contending fanatics. His Grace begins by broadly stating the position of the Church of England, and then proceeds to apply his words to the actual situation. He reminds the clergy how straitly they are bound by their solemn promise to adhere to the Prayer-Book; an obligation, he significantly adds, ordered, not by Act of Parliament, but by Canon—not by the State, but by the Church. He draws a distinction, both just and necessary, between the conduct of the Tractarians, whose innovations in the older practice "they fully believed, and in most cases they were right in believing, to be in accordance with the commands of the Church," and those more recent innovators who "consider the services ordered by her authority to be a degradation of the highest form of worship." Then follows a luminous and suggestive paragraph on the reason why the Church concedes in the matter of doctrine a liberty which it refuses in the matter of ceremonial. The latter is, in truth, the condition of the former. "It is the unity of the ceremonial that makes the toleration of diversity of opinion possible. The ceremonial stands before us as the order of the Church; the teaching is, and must be to a very large extent, the voice of the individual. The ceremonial is for all alike; the clergyman and the layman are both bound by it; but when the clergyman is in the pulpit the layman is not bound by what is said in his hearing. The layman has a right to exercise his private judgment. . . . The real danger attendant on a breach of the Church's law as defined by the clergyman's promise is obviously that of schism, and this danger is most certainly not slight!" In other words, wherever the clergyman abuses the autocracy vested in him by the law, in order to change the prescribed ceremony of worship, the layman is faced by this dilemma—either to acquiesce in the innovation, and thus become morally responsible for his incumbent's action, or to secede from the Church, and thus incur the guilt of schism. That numbers have adopted the latter course is certain. The guilt of their

schism does not exclusively rest on themselves. The Archbishop proceeds to apply the Prayer-Book to the existing state of affairs, and he sets down a series of practices, now common, which he adjudges to be unlawful by the Church's law. He instances Reservation of the Consecrated Elements as an example of a practice "forbidden by positive enactment," and makes an impressive reference to the solemn promise which every clergyman has made. The remainder of the chapter is concerned with a discussion of the actual intention of the Acts of 1872 amending the Act of Uniformity. Public opinion has certainly endorsed the views of the Archbishop in this particular. Canonical obedience is defined as "the obedience which is to be rendered to the Bishop when he is giving a command which he has a right to give." "There can be no doubt that when a Bishop gives a command to observe the Rubrics, he is giving a command which he has a right to give, and the clergyman who disobeys is not only disobedient to lawful authority, but he is breaking one of the most solemn promises he ever made in his life."

5. The last part of the Charge treats of a subject which has recently been forced on the public notice by the proceedings of a number of Ritualist clergy, and which, evidently, cannot be avoided in any discussion of our circumstances which can be thorough or even serviceable—the Power of the Bishops. The Archbishop distinguishes two kinds of power, one coercive, the other not; and clearly it is the last which he considers the most important. He reminds us that, in an established and endowed Church, the coercive jurisdiction must be controlled by the State. He adopts the attitude maintained conspicuously by the late Lord Selborne, a man whom deep personal piety and keen liturgical and ecclesiastical interests rendered the least likely in the world to be what is called, more or less absurdly, an Erastian. The clergyman may not slip out of his obligation to obey, by pleading the obscurity of the Rubric. The Rubric means what it is declared to mean by those who are lawfully charged with its interpretation, that is, the Bishops and Archbishops in the first instance, and after them, in the last resort, the Ecclesiastical Courts by law established. "The

ceremonial directions of the Prayer-Book cannot, in my opinion"—I am quoting from a letter written by Lord Selborne to Archdeacon Denison in 1879—("any more than any other law, either civil or ecclesiastical, originating in and variable by human authority), be understood apart from the interpretations placed upon them by the Judicature established for that purpose by public authority; nor does it seem to me of the smallest practical importance whether I personally agree with those interpretations or not; nor whether the Judicature actually established is such as I think (founding myself either on my own inferences or on those of others, from Church history, or from preambles to English Acts of Parliament) an Ecclesiastical Judicature ought to be. Law and Judicature are, to my mind, inseparable correlative ideas; the latter is implied in, and is really part of, the former; and to deny the moral obligation of obedience to all the existing Judicatures, in any Society, is really to deny the laws of that Society, or to maintain that there is no law, but only anarchy."[1] This is the Archbishop's position, and it seems to me quite impregnable—

"The Bishop is to say what the Rubric means; and if his interpretation is doubted, the appeal is to the Archbishop. The Bishop having interpreted the Rubric, can then enjoin the observance of it, and the oath of canonical obedience requires the clergyman to obey the Bishop's injunction. The Bishop cannot in any way use coercion. The sanction is the clergyman's double promise. If the clergyman determines to break this promise, the Bishop can use no compulsion. The appeal is to the man's conscience and to the sacredness of a promise, without which he could not have entered the ministry at all." . . . "It seems to me that there is but one way in which Christian ministers can rightly follow their Master's lead, and that is by letting themselves be led by those who, under God and by God's appointment, are their natural leaders, namely, the Bishops of their dioceses." Set beside this language the Resolutions passed at the Holborn Town Hall on 13th January, and realise the difference. The mingled fatuity and insolence of those unhappy Resolutions fills me with melancholy wonder. I can only take refuge in

[1] *Memorials*, vol. i. pp. 397, 398.

the hope that most of the clergymen who voted for them did not seriously reflect on the course they pursued. The excitement of the time may perhaps extenuate their fault; yet it is difficult for any loyal Englishman, who sees how near we have been brought to grave religious disaster, to forgive or to forget this wanton addition to the difficulties of our imperilled Church. The Charge concludes with some wise observations on the folly of an excessive admiration of the past, on the special responsibilities of the English Church, and on the unique value of the Prayer-Book.

Regarding the Charge as a whole, it seems to me to succeed in the purpose which it was designed to serve. It sets forward a coherent, logical, and attractive conception of the National Church. It takes account of all the circumstances which have to be reckoned with. It steers a middle way between the excessive claims of ecclesiastical independence and the despiritualised Erastianism of the mere politician. It states with uncompromising honesty the broad characteristics of a Catholic Church. It stands firmly on the foundation of the Divine Right of the Christian Ministry, while it is evidently inspired with an Evangelical fervour which disarms the suspicions of religious Protestants. Its value seems to me very great. By frankly insisting on loyalty to the Prayer-Book as a whole, it disallows the oppugnant and intolerant attitudes of extreme partisans, and provides a platform on which all men of goodwill may meet and combine. It proves to all the world that there is no necessity for private combinations in defence of Catholic truth. *That* cause is identical with obedience to the Prayer-Book. It places in the hands of the clergy an authoritative statement of the Anglican position; thus it enables them to assist those who are in real perplexity, and wonderfully facilitates their performance of duty as teachers of their flocks. It is much to be desired that they should use the Charge for all the purposes it is capable of serving—for their own guidance, for the help of their parishioners, for the rebuke of fanaticism, for the defence and confirmation of Catholic truth, endangered now far less by the belated fanaticism of Protestant bigots than by the insensate obstinacy of men who veil under the Catholic name an indecent and impracticable egotism.

THE CONFESSIONAL IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH

[*November* 1898]

PUBLIC opinion has been invited to declare itself on the subject of a Christian practice which, *in some shape*, is coeval and conterminous with Christianity. The practice of Confession is, perhaps, of all subjects the least suited for popular discussion; it touches interests so sacred, it wakes resentments so relentless, it is involved in such inevitable mystery, that the chances of discussion being either frank, or fair, or well-informed, are extremely slight. This would be the case under any circumstances; but as the subject is discussed by Englishmen at the end of the nineteenth century there is more to be said. There is behind the practice a history of acute and bitter controversy. The common fortune of all Christian institutions has not failed to attach also to that which, for purposes of convenience, I will call the Confessional. It also has been materialised, degraded, distorted into almost unimaginable abuses; and, necessarily, it has provoked against itself the deep and lasting suspicion of the Christian conscience. There is no sadder or more revolting chapter in Christian history than that which records the development of the Confessional. No well-informed historian will wonder at or resent the vehement and intractable prejudices which reveal themselves whenever the public attention is directed towards this subject. Frankly admitting all this, there yet remains the fact that, in some shape or other, the Confessional has had its place in the Christian Society from the day when S. James bade the sick man confess his sins before the assembled presbyters, to this age, when the English clergyman is required to invite to a private Confession those who cannot quiet their sin-burdened consciences. In principle the Confessional is Apostolic; the

question of its rightfulness is really closed to those who admit the finality of an Appeal to Apostolic Practice. Of course, it may be urged that the conflict is really joined on the subject of method, not of essential principle. All Christians admit the necessity of *some* confession, and few, if any, would deny that the Christian Society was endowed by the Divine Founder with "the Power of the Keys"; the controversy rages over other questions. Is the Confession to be private or public, optional or compulsory, occasional or frequent? How is the Christian Society to administer "the power of the Keys"? May any member exercise that power, or is its exercise limited by special Divine appointment to a sacerdotal order, or is it constitutionally vested in those to whom the Society delegates the function? And what is the actual character of Absolution? Is it absolute or conditional, final or provisional, plenary or limited? All these and many other questions have been the real subjects of contention, not the fundamental principle upon which the Confessional rests. Nevertheless it is salutary to remember that the controversy is not on matter of principle, but on a lower platform altogether. It relates solely to conditions, methods, and machinery.

The practical question seems to be this—Can it be wisely tolerated in the National Church that the practice of private Confession to the clergy should be authorised and provided for? Of course, if the Church were a non-established denomination the question would not arise. The Confessional in the Roman community, though feared and suspected, is not within the range of the present agitation. Still less does the Nation concern itself about the modes of Confession prevalent in the numerous Dissenting bodies. But the National Church cannot claim to stand outside the criticism of the Nation; every citizen has a measure of responsibility for the action of the State; and so long as the State maintains the legal Establishment of the Church of England, it is plainly irrational and futile to resent the free expression of civic opinion on the constitution and working of that which is the greatest, most ancient, and, in its activities, most ubiquitous of the National institutions.

Here it is important to remember that those who would prohibit private Confession in the National Church are

definitely departing from the Reformation Settlement. The Protestant party are, whether they know it or not, repudiating the very authority which in other respects they profess to assert. The action of the Reformers—the settlement reached with so much labour and conflict by the State at the Reformation—is thus described by a cool and judicious writer who wrote in 1827, some years before the Oxford Movement had fluttered the dovecotes of the Establishment—

"Auricular confession," writes Hallam in his once famous *Constitutional History of England*, "as commonly called, or the private and special confession of sins to a priest for the purpose of obtaining his absolution, an imperative duty in the Church of Rome, and preserved as such in the statute of the Six Articles and in the religious codes published by Henry VIII., was left to each man's discretion in the new order; a judicious temperament which the Reformers would have done well to adopt in some other points. And thus, while it has never been condemned in our Church, it went without dispute into complete neglect. Those who desire to augment the influence of the clergy regret, of course, its discontinuance; and some may conceive that it would serve either for wholesome restraint or useful admonition. It is very difficult, or perhaps beyond the reach of any human being, to determine absolutely how far these benefits, which cannot be reasonably denied to result in some instances from the rite of Confession, outweigh the mischiefs connected with it. There seems to be something in the Roman Catholic discipline, and I know nothing else so likely, which keeps the balance, as it were, of moral influence pretty even between the two religions, and compensates for the ignorance and superstition which the elder preserves; for I am not sure that the Protestant system in the present age has any very sensible advantage in this respect, or that, in countries where the comparison can fairly be made, as in Germany or Switzerland, there is more honesty in one sex, or more chastity in the other, when they belong to the Reformed Churches."

This is a just and balanced statement by one who knew the value of words, and it may be commended to those too ardent zealots who, in their eagerness to abolish "the Confessional," sink to suggestions, and even assertions, equally unworthy,

unfounded, and uncharitable. Hallam certainly underrated the extent to which the practice of private Confession survived in the Reformed Church. The 113th Canon of 1604 clearly assumes the practice—

"Provided always, that if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the minister, for the unburdening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him; we do not anyway bind the said minister by this our constitution, but do straitly charge and admonish him, that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy (except they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called into question for concealing the same), under pain of irregularity." Half a century later, Jeremy Taylor compiled his *Ductor Dubitantium* avowedly for the guidance of the clergy in hearing Confessions. In his preface he laments the "scarcity of books of conscience," which in part he attributes to "the careless and needless neglect of receiving private confessions." He was himself chosen by the excellent Evelyn to be his "ghostly father." Archbishop Wake in 1687 asserted the practice of the Church of England very clearly. "The Church of England refuses no sort of confession, either publick or private, which may be any way necessary to the quieting of men's consciences, or to the exercising of that power of binding and loosing which our Saviour Christ has left to His Church."

The "complete neglect" of which Hallam speaks was true of the eighteenth century, though probably then not without individual exceptions.

Moreover, the excision of the Confessional from the Church of England would involve a drastic revision of the Prayer-Book; the familiar language of the General Absolution could not safely be retained; the exhortation to Confession in the Communion Service and the Formula of Absolution in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick would have to be expunged; and the Formula of Ordination could not be longer tolerated. Changes of this kind, cutting so deeply into the texture and so vitally affecting the temper of the Prayer-Book, could only be made, if made at all, after a protracted and bitter conflict, from which every prudent citizen might

well shrink; yet nothing less is involved in the Protestant demands.

A Protestant Revision of the Prayer-Book would certainly bring about the disruption of the Church. The whole High Church Party, including a large proportion of the ablest and most learned clergy, would not accept a decided breach with the traditional System of Christianity. The toleration of the "Confessional" is the condition of preserving the unity of the National Church. The prudent citizen will be chary of adopting a course which would break up so great an instrument of social benefit.

But while the Reformation Settlement ought not to be, in this respect, disturbed, while the time-honoured formularies of the Prayer-Book ought not to be mutilated, it cannot reasonably be disputed that there is urgent need for some security against the unscrupulous zeal which abuses the generous liberty of the established system in order to rebuild the fabric of spiritual servitude which the Nation demolished in the sixteenth century. Admitting this necessity, it is yet very necessary to avoid exaggeration and mistake.

That the practice of private Confession has extensively revived, seems to many persons evidence of a general disloyalty on the part of the clergy, whom they accordingly denounce in no measured terms. The public ear is assailed with cries of "Sacerdotal Conspiracy," and the ancient bugbear of Romanism is again paraded before the bewildered multitude. All this is folly and worse. Private Confession has revived because it represents the natural satisfaction of a normal spiritual need. So long as the panic of Protestantism held sway over the national imagination, that practice was thrown into discredit; but with the spread of intelligence, and the decline of the middle class (which was ever the stronghold of the anti-Popery sentiment), the national conditions have reasserted themselves, the normal forces have resumed their authority, and a practice which the history of Christianity proves to be integral to the Christian system, has taken again its place in the religious life of England. The Oxford Movement has owed its influence less to the exertions of its disciples than to the fact that it coincided with the necessary development of English religion. No doubt the circumstance that

the ancient doctrine and method of penitence had been retained in the Reformed Church determined the actual form which that development has, in this particular, taken; and it must be admitted that from this source a real danger has arisen, against which precautions are required. The Roman system affects the current doctrine and practice of the English Church. Perhaps this is inevitable, following from the centripetal action of a natural law; but none the less it constitutes a peril of no mean magnitude, and has created the actual problem which now perplexes the public mind.

It is dishonest to deny, and foolish to minimise, the practical risks of the present situation. Confessions are being heard; by the law of England they are required to be heard; by the more august and powerful law of spiritual development they will be heard in ever greater numbers. But who should rightly hear them, and where, and how? Christian experience yields no clearer witness than this, that singular and baleful perils attach to the Confessional. To admit the legitimacy, nay more, the necessity, of Confession, is not to repudiate or disregard this witness. The clergy of England are the least technically trained clergy in the world. Public school and university education are little adapted to qualify a man for the difficult and delicate ministry of hearing Confessions. Jeremy Taylor's complaint about the absence of books of moral theology is still valid. Untrained and unguided, the average English clergyman is not qualified for the task which the law of England imposes on him as part of the system of the National Church, the faithful performance of which is daily being required of him more urgently by the legitimate demands of distressed consciences. The real danger lies here. An unregulated Confessional, administered by an untrained clergy, on unknown and unrecognised principles, is an anomaly, a menace, and a scandal; and this is what at present the Church of England provides for her members.

Instead, therefore, of raising an irrational and useless clamour against the practice of private confession, it would seem the duty of the prudent citizen to insist upon such securities against abuse as efficient regulation by authority might provide.

In the first place, security is required against any infringement of spiritual liberty. The Church of England stands sharply distinguished from the Church of Rome in this particular. Private Confession is required of all Christians by the latter Church; it is required of none in the former. A permission must not be transmuted into an obligation. The recognition of a Christian privilege must not grow into the proclamation of a Christian duty. That the distressed conscience may seek relief by a private and particular acknowledgment of fault, is one thing; that every conscience must be bound by that procedure, is quite another. The spiritual franchises of English Churchmen are really imperilled by the tendency (the existence of which cannot be disputed) to find in Rome the model of the clergyman's performance of duty; yet so long as the English clergy are without direction or control in their own Church, it is no matter for surprise, though great matter for regret, that they should betake themselves to the only organised and authoritative penitential system within their reach. But the genius of the Roman system is utterly opposed to English notions; "we cannot be well supplied out of Roman storehouses," said Jeremy Taylor; "for though there the staple is, and very many excellent things exposed to view; yet we have found the merchants to be deceivers, and the wares too often falsified."

In the next place, security is required against moral abuses. The prudent citizen cannot close his eyes to the plain facts of which history testifies. The clergyman, not less than the penitent, has a direct interest in obtaining protection against the possibilities of scandal which attach to a ministry which, however legitimate, is, in practice, suspected, unregulated, and almost furtive. The public ought to receive assurance that Confessions are only heard by those who are authoritatively certified to be qualified for the task, that they are heard under suitable and recognised conditions, that the moral principles which govern the Confessors are sound. The English clergy would welcome the action of authority in restricting the right to exercise this ministry to those of their number whose age, learning, character, and position marked them out as meriting the public confidence. The prejudice of

the multitude regards the "Confessional box" with aversion, and probably for some while to come that prejudice will prohibit any sanction of its use; yet the "Confessional box" represents an honest and, on the whole, successful attempt to prevent certain abuses, and something analogous to it seems requisite if the present tendency towards Confession continues. In the interest of a healthy morality, it is eminently desirable that the Confessional in the English Church should be definitely purged from that taint of furtiveness which discredits it in the general judgment, but which really reflects the unreasoning suspicions of the populace far more than the mind of the clergy. Moreover, there is urgent need that the manuals which are in use by Confessors should represent a sound morality. The subtle casuistry which Jeremy Taylor and Blaise Pascal, almost at the same time, exposed, can never be tolerated in the Church of England; and if the Confessional involved the reintroduction of that demoralising sophistry, there would be large excuse for the vehemence of its antagonists; but the contrary is the case. Only here also the influence of Romanism on the English Church is always to be reckoned with, and a certain anxiety is not unreasonable, and need not be uncharitable.

It may, perhaps, be permitted to one whose ordinary duties have brought him into contact with aspects of urban life not ordinarily familiar to laymen, to raise a respectful protest against the brutal invective which is directed against the Confessional, on the ground that it is a "sink of pollution" and a "school of vice." I deprecate as strongly as any man those nauseous casuistic discussions in which the great Roman casuists abound; I abhor the coarseness which can handle so freely the horrible and disgusting vagaries of human sin; I shudder at the rashness which can adventure that treatment of moral diseases, so malignant, so contagious, and so fatal: but I repudiate, with an indignation for which I can find no sufficient terms, the wicked and infamous suggestion that in this difficult and painful ministry the English clergy are actuated by any base or unworthy motive. Social life under modern conditions is prolific of moral problems. There are developments of urban habit which are almost incredibly debased. The English clergy are striving against horrors

of which the cultivated and respectable laity of the upper middle class, happily for themselves, know nothing. Their work is fraught with perils. They themselves make mistakes, and sometimes, here and there, they fail under the strain; but they have a right to the confidence and the generous interpretation of the English people, in whose most evident and solemn interest they are, under obloquy and amid perplexity, unceasingly engaged. This is a digression, yet it is not wholly superfluous. The most urgent necessity of the hour is to lift Church questions out of the "præternatural suspicion" in which fanaticism has involved them, and to discuss them calmly and justly in the light of day, and by the guidance of adequate information, with a single regard to the national interest.

CUI BONO?

An Open Letter to Lord Halifax on the Present Crisis in the Church of England

Preface

In preparing a Sermon on the sin of Pride, to be preached before the University of Oxford on the bequest of the Rev. William Master, who died in 1684, I read through a quaint little book published by that divine in 1653. There I found a Prayer which seems to me so beautiful in itself, and so timely at the present juncture, that I transcribe it here, and offer it to the use of English Churchmen.

For the Spirit of moderation and discerning

"Oh Lord, the Father of Lights and fountain of Wisdom! Into how many parties and interests are those that profess Thy Name divided! How many lay claim to Thy truth, that in the same particulars contradict each other! And how many colours are found out to make each pretence seem probable! How difficult is it to determine which is right! how uncomfortable to hover between uncertainties! how dangerous to resolve at a rash adventure! Oh Lord, Thy unworthy servant hath a long time sadly considered these premises: and amidst those floods of doubt and controversies which now cover the face of Thy Church, can scarce (with Noah's dove) finde one dry place whereon to rest his foot. Oh my God, I betake me to the Ark, my refuge: my eyes are up unto Thee; Thou hast bid those who want wisdom to ask of Thee, Who givest liberally and upbraidest no man: vouchsafe me, I beseech Thee for Thy Son's sake, a share in that Thy promise, that Thy Spirit shall lead me into all

truth. Give me a discerning spirit, that I may discern between things that differ, and a stable minde, with a settled judgment, that I may not be toss'd about with every wind of doctrine, but let my senses be so exercised that I may prove all things, and firmly hold whatsoever is good: And because knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth, joyn humility and charity with my knowledge, and effectually bow my heart to do Thy Will, and then Thy promise is, That I shall know it. Furthermore, O Lord, because of all Thy attributes, Thou commendest none more to our imitation than those of love and mildness, grant O Lord that I may not deceive myself, and think it a piece of Religion to be bitter against my Brethren; but make me to study and practise that wisdom which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisie. O Lord, grant me my request for Thy Son's sake. Amen."

My Lord,—Little more than three years have elapsed since the Church of England exulted in a great electoral triumph. The Nation had spoken its mind in no uncertain tones, and that mind was decisively adverse to the policy of Disestablishment. On all hands men of affairs were heard to declare that the question had been laid to rest for a generation at least. To-day Disestablishment is on many men's tongues, and in all men's minds. The Leader of the Liberal Opposition seems half disposed to risk again, and on a greater scale, the experiment which wrecked his party in 1895. The Liberation Society exhibits once more its baleful activity. The "Free Churches" gather eagerly to another and more hopeful onslaught on their hereditary foe. Where yesterday all was dejection and perplexity, to-day there are all the signs of ardour and purpose. A transformation, equally surprising and melancholy, has passed over the political landscape. The victors of 1895 talk with apprehension and uncertainty; the vanquished never exulted in fairer chances. Nor is this all. The change has gone deeper. Grave Churchmen, to whom the idea of Disestablishment has been abhorrent, and who have hitherto rejected the very suggestion of Disendowment as a manifest impiety, are now discussing the necessity of the

one, and the conditions of the other. A section of the clergy, neither numerically small nor personally insignificant, openly declares that in the destruction of the State connection lies its best prospect of obtaining satisfaction for aims which—whatever may be thought of their character—are held with passionate devotion and advocated with unflagging zeal. All this—so sudden and so ominous—compels reflection even in the most thoughtless. The question forces itself on the mind, and presses for answer, What has brought about this swift and tremendous revolution in the political outlook of the National Church? What is the spring from which consequences of such magnitude have flowed? The squalid agitation, set on foot by an obscure London fanatic, destitute of every claim to the public notice, has been the immediate antecedent, but assuredly not the ultimate cause. *That* lies deeper, and will operate when the iconoclasm of Mr. John Kensit has run its course. The agitation has uncovered the shrouded weakness of the National Church; it has forced into view the inveterate antagonisms within her pale; it has dragged into publicity aspects and tendencies of her manifold activity which are equally novel and repellant to the mass of Englishmen. The question has to be faced by every Churchman what attitude he shall adopt towards the sudden and imperative movement for a restoration of uniformity in the National Church. Shall he lend his influence to swell the demand for repressive legislation against the Ritualists? or shall he make a bold fight for the illegal or non-legal practices which impunity has made habitual in many congregations? or, finally, shall he cast in his lot with the ancestral enemies of the Church of England, and give his vote for Disestablishment and Disendowment? The situation is so grave and so difficult, that no thoughtful Churchman can avoid a certain anxiety lest, in the inevitable excitement of an agitation conducted with a brutality happily of rare occurrence in English politics, partisan passions shall become exasperated beyond endurance, and the abiding interests of the Nation be sacrificed to the fury of domestic strife. In venturing to address to your Lordship a few reflections on the present state of the Church of England, I ought, perhaps, to justify my adoption of this mode of discussing a public

question. I shall, however, content myself with two statements. I write an "Open Letter" because I desire to address myself to the mass of thoughtful English Churchmen, and they are not easily reached from the pulpit or the platform. I take the liberty of connecting my letter with your Lordship's name, because, not only are you recognised as the leader of a large section of the High Church Party, but also because you have indicated, by proposing a Conference, your own desire for the restoration of peace. In that desire I most sincerely concur, and my single object in writing is to minister to that blessed end. The mischiefs of the present agitation are, indeed, but too evident. A truly fearful responsibility rests on those who began, and on those who assist it. The fell and violent passions of the multitude have been deliberately excited, and the objects of their derision and even of their brutality have been very solemn religious facts. The clergy have been, are still, held up to public ridicule and detestation. Their sacred character has been dragged in the mire of popular scorn, and their access to many hearts wholly closed. Religion itself, in becoming the subject of coarse jests and fanatical diatribes, has largely lost its authority over large sections of the people. But I need not continue; the evil consequences of the present agitation are too plain to be missed by any save the agitators themselves, to whom, indeed, it has brought notoriety, influence, and, in some cases, even pecuniary profit. I believe the greatest part of Churchmen would welcome an escape from the present confusion, and, certainly, the kindly reception accorded to your Lordship's suggestion of a Conference indicates as much. Personally, I cannot profess myself very sanguine of the success of that method of reaching harmony. It seems to be the first condition of a useful Conference that the members should be agreed on first principles, and, at least, generally on the objects in view. Assuredly it would be extravagant to claim that this condition would be fulfilled in any Conference which was really representative of the English Church. Moreover, I cannot conceal from your Lordship that I feel a certain resentment against private methods of dealing with National questions. The Church of England does not exist for the sake of the religious parties which play so prominent a rôle

in her history, nor can she permit their interests to be identified with her own, or accept their concordats as the law of of her own being. Before accepting the proposal of a Conference, I should require to be satisfied that it was adequately representative, that the real issues would be placed before it, that its decisions should be submitted to the ratification or rejection of the Church at large. At present, indeed, I cannot perceive such a measure of fundamental agreement and mutual understanding as would justify any reasonable expectation that a Conference would have any other result than to still further embitter those who are now ranged in conflict. The imperative necessity of the hour is the discovery of a common platform on which Church questions can be discussed on their merits. As things now stand, both the contending parties appear to have adopted positions which do not permit of any such discussion. The problems of the National Church are regarded from standpoints so arbitrary and so distinct that agreement is altogether impossible. It is far from my present purpose to criticise harshly any legitimate views of the English Church; I admit in advance that much may be true, and much more be arguable, which yet cannot be accepted in a useful discussion of practical difficulties. I certainly hold that the National Church must comprehend within her fellowship widely divergent opinions, and, within certain inevitable limits, widely divergent practices; but this comprehension is only possible, and surely it is only reasonable, on the condition of a generous mutual toleration. Standpoints which are legitimate enough for all the purposes of personal religion, become intolerable when pressed as the necessary assumptions of public policy. Moreover, I must frankly say that neither the High Church nor the Low Church parties exhibit a very coherent or logical faith in their respective principles. Both profess principles which they cannot apply in practice, and which they would not if they could. In both cases the principles are for certain purposes and under certain conditions true and serviceable; but in neither case are they so absolutely and universally true as to justify the passionate insistence which both parties equally manifest. The "undivided Church" and the "Reformation" are the opposing battle-cries; but if examined, neither the one nor the other

can rightly be proposed as the final authority in the settlement of modern Church problems.

Apart from all questions of ecclesiastical theory, and considering only the practical worth of that authority of the "undivided Church" to which High Churchmen so frequently and so confidently appeal, can it be denied that we are little helped by an authority which is really unconscious of modern conditions, and wholly silent on many subjects of modern perplexity? I suppose the weightiest decisions of the "undivided Church" are enshrined in the Canons of those famous "Œcumenical" Synods, to which the Church in all succeeding times has ascribed exceptional authority. But will the puzzled English Churchman be anywise assisted by a reference to those venerated decrees? Take the first and greatest of the Councils. Of the twenty genuine Canons of Nicæa (A.D. 325), not one (unless it be the first, which deals with a matter of no practical importance in modern times) is now fully observed; most are patently obsolete; and some, by the general procedure of the modern Church, are frankly disregarded. I am not aware that any later Council has specifically repealed the following rules, which, on the High Church theory, are binding on the modern Christian by the divinest terrestrial authority of which we have knowledge:—

"Canon III.—The great Synod strictly forbids Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and all clergymen, to retain any woman in their houses, under pretence of her being a disciple to them [*συνείσακτον ἔχειν*]; but only a mother, sister, aunt, or other unsuspected person.

"Canon XV.—For the taking away the custom which prevails in some places contrary to Canon, it is decreed, on account of disturbances and disputes that have occurred, that neither Bishop, Priest, nor Deacon remove from city to city; and that if any one, after the decree of the holy and great Synod, attempt it, all the proceedings in this case shall be null, and the party shall be restored to the Church in which he was ordained.

"Canon XX.—Because there are some who kneel on the Lord's Day, and even in the days of Pentecost; that all things may be uniformly performed in every parish,

it seems good to the holy Synod that prayers be made to God standing."

The Canons of Constantinople (A.D. 381), Ephesus (A.D. 431), and Chalcedon (A.D. 451) have reference, for the most part, to contemporary problems, and are wholly obsolete. I need not remind you that the Canons of these famous Synods form but a small part of the mass of ecclesiastical law which was recognised by the primitive Church. The first Canon of Chalcedon expressly confirms "the Canons of the holy Fathers made in every Synod to this present time," language which Dr. Bright explains to include not only the decisions of Nicæa, Constantinople, and Ephesus, but those also "of the local Eastern Synods of Ancyra, Neocæsarea, Antioch, Gangra, and Laodicea." He adds that "when the Council of Chalcedon assembled, a collection of such Canons was current." Nor can the legislative legacy of the "undivided Church" be limited to the formidable mass of Canons recognised at Chalcedon; two, or, as the Easterns affirm, three more Œcumenical Councils passed fresh enactments; other Synods, less authoritative in themselves, were raised to œcumenical authority by the subsequent acceptance of their decrees. It would be an easy task to fill these pages with examples of Church Laws which have never been repealed, because, since the division of East and West, no authority exists in the world competent to revise or repeal them, but which are obsolete, or impracticable, or contrary to modern conceptions of right, or based on demonstrable errors.

It may, however, be objected that no instructed "High Churchman" could be guilty of the patent absurdity involved in the view of œcumenical authority which I have criticised. The view of Catholic obligation, which is now in the ascendant, has cast aside the rigidity of the older Anglican doctrine, and inclines to accept as binding on the Church only so much of the primitive system as was incorporated in the tradition of the Western Church. The early Tractarians took a sterner view of their responsibility; and the sixth Tract in their famous series was devoted to the task of proving "the present obligation of primitive practice." If I understand rightly your Lordship's language at Bradford, you are ready to acquiesce in the extensive departures from the

primitive system which, after the breach of ecclesiastical unity, took place in the West. Protracted disuse of primitive practices amounts, in your opinion, to a tacit, but not on that account the less authoritative, repeal of conciliar decrees which had behind them the weight of Catholic Antiquity. You recognise the binding character of the Western revision of Primitive Practice; subject, however, to yet one further limitation. The "Book of Common Prayer" is allowed to supersede, revise, and condemn the Western revision of Primitive Practice. Your language was unambiguous and decisive—

"We shall oppose by every means in our power any attempt to deprive us of the use of all such ceremonies, laudable customs, and practices not expressly forbidden by the Book of Common Prayer, with which the Church in the West has been used to accompany the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist."

Of course the authority of the Prayer-Book is precisely determined by its origin. I assume that your Lordship accepts it as the formal and constitutional expression of the mind of the National Church. The sanction of Convocation can hardly mean less than that, and such sanction the Prayer-Book does unquestionably possess. I conclude, therefore, that the "High Church" party, as represented by your Lordship, does really recognise the plenary authority of the National Church to revise the practical system of Primitive Catholicism; that the precedents of the "undivided Church" may be lawfully set aside by the English Convocation; and that in all matters, not affecting the faith and constitution of the Church, there is complete liberty of action vested in that assembly. You, my Lord, are prepared to loyally endorse the doctrine of the Thirty-fourth Article:—

"It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. . . .

"Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying."

It seems to be clear that the constant references to the

"undivided Church" are superfluous and misleading. *That* authority has long since been superseded, first by the Western Church, which built up a tradition of its own, next by the National Church of England, which revised, superseded, and largely repudiated that tradition. That the drastic action of the Reformers was avowedly determined by their preference for the discarded primitive system, may be admitted; it does not affect the argument. Western tradition or primitive practice are, even on the High Church theory, only so far obligatory on the English Churchman as they are not specifically set aside by the Law of the National Church. Neither the one nor the other has any independent authority. The assent of the National Church, either by positive enactment or by tacit acceptance, is the condition of the recognition of that authority; but, that condition fulfilled, the religious duty of such recognition follows as a matter of course.

Now, leaving outside the discussion all question of the intrinsic reasonableness of this position, I am here concerned to show that in practice it is really destitute of value. I need not travel beyond your Lordship's Bradford speech for proof of this. You were dealing with the practice of reserving the consecrated elements for ministration to the sick. You asserted with justice that the practice was primitive, and under certain circumstances plainly convenient; and, then, you faced the Prayer-Book. The Bishop of Lichfield's dictum, that reservation is primitive but illegal, you swept aside with some signs of impatience; and you applied yourself to the task of disproving what you disapproved. You explained away the Rubric at the end of the Communion Service, and the very decisive language of the Twenty-eighth Article; you appealed to the Dean of Lichfield against his Bishop, to a fourteenth century constitution of Archbishop Peckham (which is totally irrelevant if your main contention be unsound), and, finally, to the Episcopate, not to settle the question of interpretation between your Lordship and Bishop Legge, but, "in view of the necessities of the case and the custom of the whole Church from the earliest times," to "openly recognise" reservation. But you left out of your argument a fact which, on your own principles, is decisive of the whole issue. The Prayer-Book has not left the treatment of sick communicants in any un-

certainty. Even allowing (though, I think, few impartial men would concede so much) that neither the Rubric in the Communion Service nor the Twenty-eighth Article bear the sense they seem to bear, and have been generally supposed to bear, the illegality of reservation is beyond all question determined by the provision actually made for the Communion of the Sick. Unprimitive certainly, inconvenient very probably that provision may be, but there it is in plainest enactment—

"But if the sick person be not able to come to the Church, and yet is desirous to receive the Communion in his house; then he must give timely notice to the Curate, signifying also how many there are to communicate with him (which shall be three or two at the least), and having a convenient place in the sick man's house, with all things necessary so prepared, that the Curate may reverently minister, he shall there celebrate the Holy Communion."

My Lord, I submit that when the Prayer-Book prescribes a certain method of performing any Christian function, that prescription is necessarily a prohibition of any other method. In this matter I am personally disposed to agree with your Lordship that the primitive system is preferable to that prescribed in the Prayer-Book, but as to the prescription there is no possibility of doubt, nor as to the legal effect of it, nor as to the logical requirement of the theory which elsewhere you have affirmed. Here I may be permitted to point out that your Lordship stands committed to a very strict view of the obligation of Prayer-Book Rubrics. You denounce in terms of great severity the clergy who omit to read the daily Offices, though the Rubric expressly refers that duty to their own judgment; or fail to celebrate the Holy Communion every Sunday and Saint's Day, though the Rubric expressly makes that rule contingent on a circumstance which in many parishes cannot always be counted on. Why does the Rubric for Communicating the Sick receive such scanty notice, or rather, why is it ignored altogether, when other Rubrics, dealing with matters of less gravity, are pressed so rigorously? Is it not evident that, whatever value for other purpose your view of Authority may have, for the purpose of a serviceable discussion of practical problems it is useless? Can it be altogether condemned as

unreasonable or unfair that ordinary Englishmen, unversed in the subtleties of ecclesiastical theory, should conclude that your Lordship, and those whom you represent, recognise the binding force of the Rubrics only so far as they coincide with their own preconceived notions, and ignore Rubrics without hesitation when they conflict with those notions? Would it not be more frank and more practically useful to abandon these misleading appeals to the "undivided Church," and "the Church of the West," and the Prayer-Book, as if any of these, or all of them together, were adequate for the guidance of the Church in her treatment of the problems, unsuspected in earlier times, of modern life? It is no disrespect to these venerable Authorities, nor does it argue any unwillingness to accept the guidance of the past, to maintain that present experience also has its rightful claim, and that the law of progress in Religion, as in every other sphere, is necessarily a law of change. I plead for a discussion of our religious difficulties which shall be frank, free, and fearless. A Conference in which the several members are pledged in advance to certain decisions could lead to nothing but exasperation. Your Lordship seems to concede this when you remark with obvious justice, "that the questions with which the Church of England has to deal cannot adequately be dealt with merely by a reference to the settlement of the fifteenth and sixteenth [? sixteenth and seventeenth] centuries"; but you seem to recede again into the confusion of your theory when you warn the Bishops, in a tone which is minatory to the verge of disrespect, "that if they would exact respect for their own authority, it can only be in proportion as they themselves recognise and submit to the authority of that whole Catholic Church of Christ, of which the Church of England is but a part, to which it appeals, and to which the Episcopate, no less than the clergy and laity, are bound to submit." The suspicion crosses the mind on reading such words, that your Lordship does not really concede to the National Church any true autonomy, not, of course, in the sphere of the Faith, or the Sacraments, or the Apostolic Ministry, which admittedly lie outside the range of national action, but of discipline and worship and ecclesiastical customs; and, further, it must be conceded that the curious hostility to the term "Anglican"

which has manifested itself in the English Church Union of which your Lordship is the President, and which inspired some amazing utterances at Bradford from a well-known East End Incumbent, lends support to this suspicion. Nevertheless, in the absence of any express declaration to the contrary, I prefer to believe that, since you are prepared to accept the Prayer-Book modifications of the Western tradition with respect to the mode of Eucharistic Celebration, you are equally prepared to acknowledge the right of the same National Church, which put forward the Prayer-Book, to exercise no diminished authority with respect to other matters.

If, leaving the High Church party, I turn to their opponents, I find that the same fault, in a still more aggravated form, marks their discussion of our practical difficulties. The "Reformation" is inscribed on the banners of agitators who would be distressed indeed to define the meaning of the phrase. It is, indeed, the misfortune of the Low Church party to have the support of the ignorant multitudes of the lower middle class, whose religious prejudices are hereditary, and who seem, beyond all other sections of English folks, to be subject to nightmares of religious terror or suspicion. It would, of course, be unjust to credit the party as a whole with the fanaticism of its rank and file, yet it cannot be denied that the prospects of a peaceful solution of the ecclesiastical problems of the hour are gravely compromised by the unreasoning and intractable attitude of the "Protestant" masses. The more moderate Low Churchmen profess to take their stand on the "Reformation Settlement," and they accept the Prayer-Book as the authoritative declaration of that Settlement. But not without large exceptions. They repudiate with some contempt a literal insistence on either the language of the formularies, or the practical directions of the Rubrics. They, too—like their rivals—subscribe the Prayer-Book with an *arrière pensée* to the effect that where it clashes with another authority (in this case the "Protestant Faith," in that the "Primitive Church" and the "Western tradition") they will repudiate its doctrine and ignore its rules. If the interests concerned were not so serious, the aspect of these competitors in artifice would be actually

ludicrous. The Prayer-Book, in their hands, bears no inapt resemblance to the venerable relics of ancient Rome in the Middle Ages. The rival families of the city united to facilitate their decay by using them as a common quarry from which to obtain materials for their internecine conflicts. Both parties have their pet Rubrics, which they themselves religiously obey, with which they confront one another, by which they vainly strive to prove their own loyalty and the dishonesty of their rivals. Neither accepts all the Rubrics, and, for the best of reasons, the Rubrics are not capable of practical application. Under these circumstances, it would seem the obvious duty of sensible men to recognise that a reasonable course must lie in one of two directions. Either patient mutual tolerance, or revision of the Prayer-Book; a passionate insistence on unqualified obedience to the Prayer-Book is indecent in those who themselves habitually disobey some or other of its rules, and that is the case equally with High Churchmen and with Low Churchmen. To this subject I shall recur later.

I do not pursue the subject further here, because my purpose is not to formally criticise the contending partisan theories, but to point out their practical insufficiency; and, on that ground, to submit that, for our present necessities, it is futile to appeal against the existing system of the National Church to the law and practice of the undivided Church in the one case, or the "Reformation" in the other. I am far from denying the legitimacy or questioning the value of a constant reference to both. The experience of Christians, though gained under different conditions and in a long-distant age, can never be destitute of value. The problems which confront the Church in her Divine warfare are at once always novel and always ancient. The circumstances of human life are in continual flux, and the positive regulations which match the needs of one generation will scarcely do as much for any other. It would seem the primary condition of a sound judgment in ecclesiastical affairs to distinguish clearly between principles which are of perpetual validity, and institutions which at best have but a contingent and temporary usefulness. The rigidity of mental attitude revealed in the religious controversy which has filled the columns of

newspapers, both secular and religious, and distracted the minds of men beyond recent precedent, fills me with despondency. The "Reformation" on the one side, and the "undivided Church" on the other, have become mere shibboleths, exasperating the minds of men, and really destitute of any practical worth.

My Lord, while these "Shibboleths" are bandied to and fro in the conflict of parties, the Church of England stands to lose, whichever way the victory inclines. There are, as I have already said, many signs that the general body of citizens is growing resentful of these incessant disputes, and tends to incline an attentive ear to the suggestions of those, the ancestral foes of the English Church, who counsel the ruinous policy of Disestablishment. I observe that the "High Church" party is growing more patient of the prospect of Disestablishment, and not a few of the more ardent members of the party openly declare that they are looking in that direction for escape from present difficulties. Their rivals are being forced by the necessities of the agitation to which they have, in evil hour, committed themselves, into an ever closer association with the Nonconformists. That alliance has its price, and *that*, acquiescence in the political project which the Nonconformists pursue with an almost religious ardour. The moment is propitious for the advent of a destructive politician of ability: the National Church, torn with internal dissensions, invites attack; her normal enemies have been suddenly reinforced from unexpected quarters, and a great political party confessedly needs a policy which could quicken its enthusiasm and reunite its ranks. It must be confessed that the ecclesiastical outlook is not encouraging. What can be the outcome of the amazing agitation which has spread sacrilege and blasphemy from one end of England to the other? Some parliamentary action seems to be necessary, if English precedents are to hold good. What will that action be? All men agree that it will be directed towards the restraint of Ritualism; whether that restraint be really required or not need not here be discussed. Probably the overwhelming majority of Churchmen are agreed that a stiffening of authority against clerical individualism is required; nevertheless the passing of any Act in restraint

of Ritualism would only intensify the existing anarchy. Experience has made it abundantly evident that the Ritualistic clergy are so wedded to the practices which they have adopted, that no adverse laws would obtain their obedience. The familiar cycle of events would be duly rehearsed. The law passed amid the frenzied zeal of its promoters would be treated with ostentatious contempt by its victims. The dangerous and delusive cry of "Erastianism" would certainly be raised, and as certainly would rally to the party of resistance large numbers of excellent Churchmen, whose zeal for the Church's theoretical rights is unchastened by any adequate appreciation of facts. There might be prosecutions; in that case there would be a new succession of "martyrs." The exasperation of parties would be extreme, and could hardly fail to create a general demand for Disestablishment from the High Church party. Such a demand would moralise the policy of the Liberation Society, and go far to reconcile the national conscience to projects which, in themselves, are nefarious.

I venture, therefore, to make appeal to all who regard with fear and aversion the prospect of Disestablishment, to weigh seriously the actual tendency of their own action at this juncture; and I add my protest against the perilous insistence on partisan positions which marks the attitude of the combatants on both sides of the present conflict.

I submit that the true and only legitimate standpoint from which to regard ecclesiastical questions is that of the religious interest of the nation. The Church of England is the principal instrument by means of which Christianity is brought to bear on the national life. I suppose even her political opponents will admit as much as this. The Nonconformist bodies are active, and, it is confidently affirmed, growing; undoubtedly they have exercised a powerful influence on English society, and in the main, though with considerable exceptions and limitations, that influence has been wholesome. But these denominations are all of recent growth, the most aggressive is of yesterday, and most have only become considerable within this century. They have no roots in antiquity; their development is rapid, but not more rapid than their decline; they produce few theologians of

distinction, and their moral effect is seriously compromised by their inveterate political attachments. Moreover, they are not well adapted for pastoral work; they languish wherever the conditions of life are unfavourable to sensational methods. It would not be wholly unjust to say that their strength and their weakness lie in the fact that they tend to reflect contemporary social and political movements. Over great part of England they are practically unknown. The National Church in hundreds of country parishes, and in the poorest urban districts, is the sole representative to the people of the faith and discipline of Christ. Disestablishment and disendowment would handicap, or wholly extinguish, the ministrations of religion over great part of the country. Nor would even this be the full extent of the calamity. You, my Lord, will appreciate the gravity of the failure of the National Schools. I submit that nothing could avert that failure if the Church were disestablished. The necessary extinction of numerous country cures, the extreme poverty of the clergy, the loss of prestige and even of legal position, the infinite disturbance which would be caused by the process of disendowment, and the extreme exasperation of men's minds, would inevitably—if anything in human affairs can be described as inevitable—bring about the failure of the National Schools, which have been sustained so long mainly by the exertions and sacrifices of the clergy.

Hitherto I have assumed that the Church of England would hold together through the process of Disestablishment, but I do not believe it. When I read the utterances of the leaders on both sides of the present controversy, I am amazed that even the generous latitude of a National Church can embrace such conflicting opinions. If the agitation now proceeding has done nothing else, it will at least have demonstrated the immense value of the State connection as an instrument of ecclesiastical harmony. What other power than that of the great National Tradition could hold together antipathies so fierce, aspirations so contradictory, methods so opposed! Remove that power, and what remains to arrest the natural movement of these heterogeneous elements? Disestablishment means the release of centrifugal forces which no homilies on Christian fellowship can charm into quiescence.

The National Church must face, in the wake of humiliation and pillage, the last ignominy of disruption. There are, perhaps, some persons who can regard this prospect with equanimity; they would prefer the liberty of denominationalism to the unity of a National Institution; they would exchange the "honesty" of avowedly opposed sects to the delusive harmony of an established Church. I am not of this way of thinking. To my mind, religion gains in breadth of view and range of influence infinitely more than it loses in ecclesiastical symmetry and ardour of conviction, by the fact of Establishment. I observe that while the latter qualities rarely are lacking to Christendom, the former are always tending to be lost. I do not think the quality of religion among the disestablished and non-established denominations is so superior to that among ourselves as to encourage the desire for Disestablishment. Moreover, I see that at present there is nothing more necessary to the interest of English Christianity than breadth of view and range of influence. The forces that normally tend to narrow the sympathies and restrict the activity of religious people are more than usually powerful; such forces, I mean, as reactionary panic and controversy, and, perhaps, proselytising zeal. The wisdom of the Church is to wait, to avoid conclusions of disputed points, to mark time for awhile before resuming progress. Establishment enables this; the very indignation with which the paralysis of the National Church is denounced by Church Reformers, more zealous than far-sighted, proves the restraining effect of the State connection. Our anomalous and even anarchic state indicates that Anglican autonomy is not in working order. The enemies of the Church of England are not slow to make capital out of her apparently helpless condition. She seems to float on the national life like a rudderless derelict. No doubt there is mischief and fault in all this. It may be that we have been, as a Church, too complacent, and that, in some directions where the truth was apparent, we ought to have been more vigorous in asserting rights which, though long dormant, are constitutionally unimpeachable. But, allowing this, can it be denied that the Church of England has, on the whole, gained in breadth and spirituality by her legislative and disciplinary paralysis during

this century, and that experience suggests that we have yet more to gain from the same harsh necessity? Has the Roman Church gained or lost by that legislative freedom which the Church of England has temporarily lost? May it not have been a disguised blessing that, against our will and in spite of our legal rights, we, as a Church, have been preserved from precipitate conclusions on many matters which are not really ripe for treatment, though in any truly autonomous society they must have been made the subject of legislation? And ought we not to be very slow to accept the vehement counsels of the zealots of ecclesiastical theory, when we see in our own experience how considerable indirect advantages may be involved in an ecclesiastical position which in theory is humiliating and indefensible? Now, one of the first results of Disruption would be an outburst of legislative activity. The several fragments of the dismembered Church will hasten to realise their partisan conceptions. The Low Church party, released from the widening influence of Catholic beliefs, will shrivel into a narrow Protestantism; the High Church party, no longer held to evangelical connections, will degenerate into an equally narrow Ritualism. The basal agreements which once had been kept in a salutary prominence must inevitably fall into the background, and the chief place be given henceforward to the doctrines and practices which are not basal, but distinctive of party. And this disaster will happen at a time when, throughout Christendom, the rift between educated thought and revealed religion is perceptibly widening. The broad tolerance of the Established Church has hitherto in England kept together in an exceptionally close union culture and the Christian profession; but when that honourable quality has vanished with the conditions which made it possible, who can doubt that here also the disastrous breach will become visible, and Faith grow alienated from Science? The process will be hastened, and possibly determined, by a factor which cannot be ignored. The Roman Church is now strongly planted in this country, not assuredly in the hearts of the people, still less in their respect, but in their midst, a highly organised army of invasion, fed from abroad. That Church has sacrificed every higher ideal to the single project of earthly dominion; proselytising, in

the bad sense which the word has come to bear, is the law of modern Romanism. Is it excesisve to believe that the disruption of the Church of England would enormously benefit her most relentless antagonist? We know how powerful an attraction is possessed by the Roman Church, and how strongly the fascination of her fellowship is even now felt by the "advanced" members of the High Church party; is it not certain that, when political disaster had been quickly followed by ecclesiastical disruption, that attraction would be still more powerful, and that fascination still more alluring?

You will say that these gloomy forebodings are, after all, largely speculative; that the event may falsify them. This may be allowed; but, even so, I submit that they are extremely probable, and that, in forming a judgment on a course of action, reasonable men must reckon with those results as *certain* which are, on good grounds, seen to be *probable*. Two results of Disestablishment, however, are assured, and they alone might decide a reflective Churchman to oppose that project to the uttermost—on the one hand, an enormous financial strain would be brought to bear on all religious work; on the other, a Marah stream of social bitterness would be set flowing in every parish. The alienation of the ancient endowments, involving the loss of an annual income which, on the lowest estimate, cannot be reckoned at less than £3,000,000, is no slight matter. The debasement of spiritual work by the financial straits of the clergy is even now a formidable and a growing evil. I can speak with the authority of personal experience on this matter. The Church, in the districts where it has been my fortune to labour, is largely without endowment, living "from hand to mouth," after the ideal of "Voluntaryism." I do not hesitate to affirm that the moral and spiritual "cost of collection" is appalling. Does any one who observes the current methods of obtaining money for religious and charitable objects doubt this? Are not "bazaars" a proverb of spiritual degradation? Is not philanthropic advertisement an organised system of sensationalism, not to say mendacity? Are not "statistics" of religious progress a byword? These things are ruinous to religion, however indispensable they may be to the main-

tenance of religious work. Can any reflective Churchman contemplate without alarm so vast an increase of all these evil things? I confess I sometimes reckon the despiritualising of the Church as one of the worst of the many evil promises of Disendowment. But even this is not the worst. Society will be cloven asunder by fierce resentments, which will not be assuaged for generations. In every parish there will be the bitterness of a great injury on one side, the arrogance of a baleful triumph on the other. The character of local politics, not very high at any time, will be irrecoverably ruined by the influx of the distracting animosities of a great religious feud. The best friends of local government have many reasons for regarding its future with apprehension; Disendowment will more than fulfil their gloomiest forecasts.

My Lord, I have written so largely on this matter, because it is vital to my argument that the bearings of Disestablishment on the religious interest of the English people should be clearly apprehended. In view of these grave probabilities, I submit that it is our imperative duty as good Churchmen, and (though the two characters cannot really be distinguished) as good citizens, to exert ourselves by all legitimate methods to preserve inviolate the National Status and Heritage of the Church of England. I proceed to discuss the broad conditions on which, as I see the facts, on which alone, that end can be secured.

I. If the Church of England is to remain an Established Church, her members must accept a large measure of Denominational Self-suppression. It is not sufficiently remembered that the denominational strength of the Church is enormously inferior to what her public services seem to require. Indeed, as a denomination, the Church is painfully, almost ridiculously, insignificant when compared, not with the Nonconformist bodies, none of which can vie with her in numbers, but with the nation itself, which accepts and commissions her as its spiritual organ. Probably not one in thirteen of the electors is a communicant at her altars; certainly one-third, possibly one-half, of the professed Christians in the country definitely repudiate her membership. The vast majority of the people live habitually in neglect of

her ordinances. It is evident that she is in no position to adopt the masterful tone of those earlier times when she exercised spiritual authority over all, or nearly all, the nation. She must found her claim to State Recognition not on her overwhelming denominational strength, but on her manifest services to the community. Her claim, thus founded, is a very strong one. For her denominational weakness gives no truthful indication of her general influence. The National Church bears on the national life in a thousand unsuspected ways. Her power is felt, and always felt for good, in many directions; perhaps her highest and most beneficent achievements are not capable of tabulation in the *Church Year-Book*. She lays restraining hand on the eager selfishness of a mercantile community; she mitigates by her untiring charity the inevitable hardships of a luxurious civilisation; she chastens the pride of wealth, and cheers the desolation of poverty; across the yawning chasms which open between classes and interests, she throws the holy connections of her manifold and ubiquitous philanthropy. In the great urban parishes, where not five per cent. of the population make any regular profession of Christianity, the clergy, by their pastoral labours, bring into the parochial life an element of kindliness and morality and hope which is, viewed from the standpoint of the national interest, almost infinitely valuable. As they move about the streets on their accustomed duties, they are a perpetual protest against the squalid and hungry materialism of popular life; they incarnate before the roughest sections of our people the moral law, not as a coercive force, but as a general and ever-present appeal to the conscience; and their presence is felt as a rebuke to every form of baseness. In one populous and squalid parish which I know, the police on one occasion, when the force had to be largely withdrawn for concentration in another district, requested the parochial clergy to show themselves in the streets, as their mere presence would suffice to restrain serious disorder. Now these immense national services do justify to the conscience of the democracy the continued Establishment of the Church, in spite of the fact that, as a denomination, she is far too insignificant to claim a National recognition. But manifestly her tenure of the National Status involves a recognition on

her side of the actual circumstances under which it is granted to her. The Church has had to learn, by a series of sharp lessons, that no privileges or exemptions can be implied in Establishment. In that sense, Establishment has been finally condemned by the national conscience. Establishment remains to-day in an attenuated form, binding the Church to wider duties, conferring on the people large religious franchises, but conveying no privilege to the one, and inflicting no hardship on the other. If any grievances yet remain unredressed, they need only be pointed out and substantiated by adequate proof, and their removal will be promptly effected. The State asks from the Church a large sacrifice of denominational liberty; it offers in return a splendid vantage-ground from which to wage her spiritual warfare. The Church has to choose between her own interest as a denomination and the interest of her redemptive work. My Lord, I cannot doubt what is her duty: she carries the name and commission of Him Who, in His own Person, gave example of Self-suppression. On a memorable occasion the Evangelist relates that He checked very solemnly the ambition of the sons of Zebedee; His Words seem to me eminently needed by us all at the present time. "Jesus called them to Him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. For verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (S. Mark xi. 42–45).

My Lord, you will not do me the injustice of supposing that I am unconscious that a point may be reached in the State's demand upon the Church, at which a higher interest than that of her immediate work would demand an assertion of her latent denominational rights; nor am I so arrogant as to assume that my own judgment ought to be accepted by any one else as determining when that point is reached. Yet, with all deference, I would submit to your Lordship that, as things now stand in England, no one can maintain without extravagance that the State so limits the spiritual liberty of

the Church as to make it the duty of Churchmen to seek release from Establishment. Let any thoughtful Churchman read the remarkable and most timely declarations in which the honoured chief of the Church of England has recently set forth, in words of characteristic lucidity and a certain stately simplicity, the broad conditions of teaching and worship in the National Church, and let him ask himself in all gravity whether it be not monstrous to affirm that those conditions are either iniquitous in principle or intolerable in practice. For seven years I held a great parish, which the late Bishop of S. Alban's was wont to describe as the most difficult in his diocese, and which certainly did present an amazing variety of difficult problems. I was unquestionably, as Vicar of Barking, well placed for testing the working value of the Establishment; and I can honestly say that, though I ever loyally tried to obey the law, and have at no time had the slightest sympathy with clerical illegality, I did not find in the legal requirements of my position any hindrance to my spiritual work. Hindrances enough there were, and not least among them my own incapacity, but certainly it would be monstrous to affirm that the State hindered the Church. On the contrary, I found in the National Status which I received from the fact of Establishment a most valuable starting-point for spiritual work. It opened the doors of the parishioners to my visits; it justified to their consciences my attempts to reform the more glaring iniquities of the local life; it provided me with a common platform on which I could approach pastorally persons with whom I had otherwise no relation. I adduce my own experience, my Lord, because I am at least entitled to speak with authority on that subject, and because I desire, even at the risk of an imputation of egotism, to make plain the practical bearings of those vehement denunciations of the Establishment in which some Churchmen are but too ready to indulge.

II. If the Church of England is to remain an established Church, the clergy must recover the popular confidence. It is a sad assumption that underlies this proposition, but it is undoubtedly true. The clergy have largely lost the confidence of the people. Into the causes of this unfortunate fact I cannot here enter at length. It must suffice to point out

that they are long-standing, complex, and largely impersonal. The circumstances of the English Reformation were unparalleled elsewhere. Alone of the Reformed Churches the Church of England retained the ancient episcopal government unimpaired; but this advantage was not secured without a heavy sacrifice. Alone of the Reformed Churches the Church of England has never been popular, for she has never reflected the triumph of any dominant popular party. In Scotland, for example, the Presbyterian Church expressed and secured the national aspirations of the Scottish people. The Covenants symbolised not unworthily the actual fact. The Church is the creation of Scottish national feeling, and enshrines the patriotic traditions of a brave and high-spirited race. In England the last influence that can be recognised in the long and various process of "the Reformation" is the popular will. The Tudor despotism strove for the best part of a century to force an Anglican system on the nation, and failed. The weaker Stuarts, taking up the task under more difficult conditions and with inferior resources, brought the whole ecclesiastical constitution to violent disaster; and though, after the Restoration, the Church seemed for awhile to be deeply rooted in the popular favour, the Nonconformists remained a powerful factor. The Revolution of 1688 necessarily involved a frank recognition of Nonconformity; complete religious equality has, indeed, only been secured within the present century, but, in principle, the failure of political Anglicanism was admitted by the Toleration Act of 1689. The accession of the Hanoverian dynasty undoubtedly affected injuriously the interests of the National Church. How strained the relations between the clergy and the government became is sufficiently indicated by the thoroughly unconstitutional silencing of the Convocations for more than a century (1717–1852). The effect of all this was to impress the popular mind with a settled suspicion of the ecclesiastical character. I need hardly point out how potent an influence in the same direction has been exercised by the "Oxford Movement." Whatever opinion may be held as to the general character of the Tractarian agitation, no instructed and candid Churchman any longer questions the lofty ideals and the high personal sincerity of the authors and leaders,

and few will deny that large benefits have, from that source, come to the Church and the Nation. There has, however, been this fatal defect in the whole movement. It was academic and clerical in its origin; in 1845 it ceased to be academic, and became more than ever clerical; and that is its character to this day. The laity have, in the main, been but little affected by the Tractarian Movement. No doubt individuals here and there, and congregations in London and some of the greater provincial cities, have accepted Tractarian principles, but in the main it has not been so. The English Church Union, over which your Lordship presides, is pardonably proud of its numbers, and they are, from some points of view, impressive enough. I take them to illustrate my present contention. The total membership of the Union is stated to be 33,000, of whom 4200 are clergymen (including 31 Bishops), and nearly 29,000 are lay communicants. I do not quite understand whether the 10,000 women associates are included in the membership, but, leaving them out of reckoning, what do the figures really prove, but this—that while one clergyman in every six is a High Churchman, only one layman in twenty can be so described? This, however, though not without significance, enormously overstates the strength of the High Church party; for the English Church Union only includes communicants, and the enormous majority of Englishmen are not included in that category. Melancholy though this must be by every good Churchman considered, yet it is not necessary to make it worse than experience proves it to be. For many reasons, the average law-abiding, clean-living Englishman, who attends the Parish Church Services, and readily supports any good work, is not easily persuaded to come to Holy Communion, but he is not an unbeliever, and must not be so reckoned. Such men, numbered by many hundreds of thousands, have no sympathy with the principles of Tractarianism. In any case, 29,000 laymen above the age of sixteen form rather a petty force in a nation of which the Parliamentary electors alone exceed five millions. The effect of the Oxford Movement has been to drive a wedge between the clergy and the people. The clergy are working and teaching on one conception of Christianity, the people are living and listening on another.

The very phraseology of the two has become distinct. The Vicar speaks of the Holy Eucharist, the Altar, the Priest, Catholicism, and so forth; the Churchwarden, of the Lord's Supper, the Table, the Parson or Minister, Protestantism, and the like. The relations of clergymen and parishioners become as "non-natural" as the exegesis of Tract 90. The development from "non-natural" to artificial and unreal is facile and swift. It is very clear that all the conditions of mutual suspicion are here provided. But this is by no means all. The High Church clergy have ambitions which may be, and commonly are, in themselves innocent and laudable, but which they dare not avow. They believe in the spiritual value of Confession, for instance, and they desire to promote that discipline among their people; but they are afraid to openly say as much; they seek their object quietly as occasion offers. Is it any marvel that they are the objects of parochial suspicion? nay, do they not in part, at least, deserve the obloquy they undoubtedly receive?

Two facts in particular have damaged the reputation of the clergy for honesty. The first is the secessions to Rome. In 1845 and in 1851 on a great scale, commonly on a very small one, High Church clergymen have seceded to the communion which the English laity as a whole regard with unreasoning abhorrence. Hardly a year passes without some clerical secession. The fact is easily enough explained, and the explanation is neither honourable to Rome nor discreditable to the Church of England, but one, and one only explanation suggests itself to "the man in the street." He concludes that the seceding parson was all along a Romanizing "conspirator." The other fact is the ostentatious contempt of Law and Rubric which many High Church clergymen *seem* to exhibit. I am not ignorant, of course, that the most anarchic of the Ritualists has explanations which, at least in his own opinion, exonerate him from the guilt of disobeying the Law; but it must be allowed that those explanations are not capable of such simple statement as to reach the general understanding. It is far from my intention to prefer an indictment against the Ritualist clergy; their apology may, for all I know, be convincing and sufficient. I am only concerned to point out that it is unintelligible to

the average layman. He knows that the clergyman has solemnly pledged himself at his Ordination to use the Prayer-Book and obey the Bishop, and he sees him manifestly altering the familiar services almost beyond recognition, and quite brazenly setting at naught the "fatherly admonitions" of his Bishop. He neither knows nor cares about the "First Prayer-Book," or the "Sarum use," or the subtle distinction between "canonical" and other obedience, or the mysterious transmutation of the Court of Arches into a lay court, or the spiritual insufficiency of the Judicial Committee, or a thousand other formulas and contentions which fill the atmosphere of clerical assemblies. He has the Prayer-Book in his hand, and cannot find his way about the service in many Churches by its once-sufficient guidance. He respects the Law, and is really shocked that his clergyman does not. Again, I ask, is it any marvel that he grows restless and suspicious? Is it right or charitable to provoke his almost inevitable indignation? Ought we not rather to follow the Apostolic counsel and "take thought for things honourable in the sight of all men"? My Lord, it would ill reflect the honesty I am advocating if I stopped here. Your Lordship knows, and I know, that there are some clergy who are in this sense dishonourable men, that they are consciously and deliberately pursuing aims which they know to be contrary to the whole drift and intention of the English Church. The Bishops, with few exceptions, assure us that only a small section of the clergy are positively disloyal. Their Lordships unquestionably have access to information which other men cannot obtain; they speak with the double authority of knowledge and responsibility. I cheerfully accept their assurance, but I point out that the public offence caused by disloyalty of this manifest and guilty character is out of all proportion to the number of clergymen concerned. A general uneasiness is created which spreads and deepens into that præternatural suspicion which is the condition of every kind of injustice. The reception accorded to Mr. Walsh's *Secret History of the Oxford Movement* is full of ominous suggestion. The mingled credulity and craft of the Author are infinitely discreditable to himself; and the work is everywhere disfigured by insinuations of dishonourable conduct against men

about whose nobility of character the Nation has long since made up its mind. It is a bad book, and it has a bad effect on the mind; but, in spite of all, it does succeed in fastening on the High Church clergy the hateful accusation of religious duplicity, and so raising against them the ignorant but essentially righteous manliness of average Englishmen. It is often asserted by way of apology for the lawlessness of Ritualists, that as a matter of fact the Church owes her present ritual liberty to nothing else. Even allowing this to be true, it is but too often forgotten that the success of lawlessness is always very dearly purchased. Ritual liberty is a poor exchange for the confidence of the English people, and yet nothing less has been forfeited during the process of defying and discrediting the law courts. The reflective Churchman will not regard with unmingled satisfaction any advantages won at the cost of weakening in the general mind respect for authority. Personally, I think the Church has lost far more than she has gained by the policy of the Ritualists. It is not sufficiently remembered that under the conditions of modern life the vagaries of individuals rapidly attract notice, and in exact proportion to their extravagance is their notoriety. The constant movements of population bring under the public view the extraordinary variety of ritual in the National Church. There is something almost pathetic about the professed purpose which the Prayer-Book was designed to serve, when read as part of the preface to a volume which has become the excuse of a wider diversity than it superseded. The startling differences in the conduct of public worship perplex and distress the people, and wonderfully facilitate the task of the emissaries of the Church of Rome. My Lord, I submit that the recovery of the public confidence is a matter of extreme and urgent importance; and I suggest that this must necessitate more frankness and less individualism on the part of the clergy. The disloyal section, whatever be its numbers or importance, seems to me wholly out of place within the National Church, which would be strengthened by its secession.

III. If the Church of England is to remain an Established Church, it can only be on condition that the clergy respect the National Conscience.

A witty Frenchman called the Bible and the Sunday the two English Sacraments, and there is this amount of truth in the dictum, that English Religion has fastened with extraordinary tenacity on the Supremacy of Scripture and the Sanctity of the Lord's Day. Now these are certainly not the whole of Christianity, but so far as they go they are true and valuable. It would seem the wisdom of the Church to jealously guard every sound element in the national life, and so to fashion her own teaching as to fit it on to whatever religious convictions, not actually false, the people possess. This would be the course of wisdom, and not less that of charity; unhappily it is not the course adopted by many of the English clergy. The Sabbatarian tradition, which is the abiding legacy of Calvinism, and indicates with unerring decision the actual extent of its influence, has undoubtedly run into intolerable excesses of narrowness and absurdity. I remember some years ago when I opened my Vicarage garden for the use of the parishioners on Sunday afternoons, and, through the ready helpfulness of some of them, was able to provide a very creditable brass band, I received some amazing protests. One anonymous correspondent, writing from a seaside town which I will refrain from naming, assured me, with Apocalyptic wealth of imagery, that I "was dancing to hell with my people at my heels"! I am the last person in the world to assume the championship of Sabbatarian fanaticism; nevertheless, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that a section of the High Church clergy is provoking a genuine moral revolt among many godly Churchmen by its ostentatious indifference to the sanctity of the "Lord's Day." Still more serious is the practical contempt of the Bible which prevails in the same quarters. I say *practical* contempt, for theoretically there are no signs of any such temper. Again, I admit frankly that respect for the Bible has very generally taken grotesque and fanatical forms, which not unnaturally provoke resentment and even scorn. Yet, in the main, who can deny that the veneration for the Scriptures is a sound and genuinely Catholic sentiment? It is too plain to be denied that the place once held in personal religion by the regular reading of the Bible is no longer maintained. The High Church system of replacing Mattins by Choral celebrations tends in

the same direction. The execrable habit of gabbling or monotoning the Lessons goes far to neutralise their value; and the great multiplication of devotional books, some pernicious, many mawkish, most superfluous, tends to crowd out the sacred volume. The practical neglect of the Bible is the historic condition of ecclesiastical corruption, and I cannot conceal the real anxiety I feel at the possible reaction on our whole Church life of the rapidly increasing ignorance of Scripture which I observe. Professor Beyschlag, in the *American Journal of Theology* (July 1898), relates that in the Vatican Council ecclesiastical indifference to the Scriptures had reached the length of discussing the proposed doctrine without reference to the sacred text. "A Bible by which to test the new dogma seems not to have been at hand, for Bishop Dupanloup borrowed one of the Protestant chaplain of the German Legation." Clerical contempt of the Bible has been very prominent and aggressive in the recent controversies about religious teaching in elementary schools. I have always held and urged the insufficiency of mere Bible reading, and I do not wish to be understood as in any way receding from that belief; but to think that Bible reading is insufficient is one thing, to deride and denounce it is quite another; and that the latter has but too often been the course adopted by the clergy, is, I think, unquestionable. The general conscience, I believe, is very hostile to merely "secular" education; and the clergy might be really supported by the moral conviction of the nation as a whole when they fight for definite Christian teaching in the schools. It is a sad misfortune that they should forfeit the political advantages of their position by provoking, often quite unpardonably, the Bible-venerating sentiment of the people.

My Lord, I cannot describe under any less severe description than that of gratuitous offence to the average conscience of Englishmen, the practice, but too common, of selecting the most irritating and misleading language in which to discuss religious questions. I will confine myself to two examples which are ready to my hand. What excuse is there for flaunting in the face of an apprehensive public the long-discarded Roman term for Holy Communion? Your Lordship at Bradford was careful to explain that the

members of the English Church Union "believe the Holy Eucharist, whether it be more commonly called 'the Divine Liturgy,' as in the East, or 'the Mass,' as in the West, or 'the Holy Communion' as amongst ourselves, to be one and the same service." I confess, my Lord, that this does not seem to me a very serviceable declaration. No sane man disputes what you say. The "Mass" claims to be the Sacrament which Christ instituted, and so does the English Communion, and so does the sectarian "bread-breaking." All claim the same character; but, none the less, they are not the same. When the average Englishman repudiates the "Mass" and the "bread-breaking," he is not denying that both, equally with the "Holy Communion," are representative of the original institution; he is only repudiating the specific and distinguishing character of those particular representations; in the one case, the transubstantiation-dogma and the materialised conception of sacrifice which it involves; in the other case, the absence of the ordained Minister, and even of the traditional formula of consecration, and the disbelief in sacramental grace. Is it reasonable to expect that English people should take kindly to a term which is never used in the public services of the Church, which is only once mentioned in the Prayer-Book, and then contemptuously, which is repudiated by most of the venerated "Fathers" of the Reformed Church, which has been totally disused in England for centuries, which is characteristic of the Roman Church, and, finally, which is, apart from its associations, wholly unmeaning? What conceivable advantage to religion can be set against the certain irritation and mistake? English clergy do not want, or ought not to want, to make their congregations suppose that the Roman Mass and the English Communion are *in this sense* one, that the characteristic sacramental doctrine of the one Church is identical with that of the other. The abolition of the term from the formularies of the Reformed Church declared a fact that certainly needs assertion to-day as much as ever, and it is really reckless on the part of any clergyman to provoke resentment or misunderstanding, or both, by borrowing the Roman name for the Holy Sacrament.

Again, what good purpose is served by continually speak-

ing of "Protestantism" and "Anglicanism" with a contempt which at once perplexes and exasperates the minds of average Englishmen? I adduce as an example, the language used at Bradford in your Lordship's presence by the well-known Vicar of S. Augustine's, Stepney, on which Sir William Harcourt naturally fastened, when he sought to sustain the charge of intractable disloyalty against the High Church party. I retain the notes of applause, because they indicate how completely the numerous assembly of members of E.C.U. identified itself with the speaker's views—

"Sometimes, you know, we hear of the distinctive doctrines of the Church of England. (Laughter.) Has the Church of England got any distinctive doctrines? If she had any distinctive doctrines, she would be a sect, and not a portion of the Holy Catholic Church. (Loud cheers.) I am not the least surprised the Protestants are getting exceedingly anxious. I have been in East London about fifteen years, and can say that there has been a very marked change in the aspect of the churches there in that time. . . . A few words to our friends who call themselves Anglicans. I was an Anglican once myself. (Laughter.) Indeed, I was a Protestant once myself. (Renewed laughter.) Why, Catholics are fighting your battle; that is what I have to say to Anglicans. The Protestants hate your ways as much as ours, only it is much easier to fight us than you. You have got your choral services, coloured stoles and vestments, and the like, and, observe this, all that these things mean. How is it you have got them? Because Father Mackonochie stood firm at S. Alban's, Holborn. (Tremendous cheering.)"

My Lord, I read this indecent and inflammatory language with a feeling almost of despair. But a few hours elapsed between your approving audience of Mr. Wilson's speech, and your proposal of a Conference to restore peace. My Lord, can you seriously hope that any Conference can exorcise from English minds the alarm and suspicion which is provoked in them by Mr. Wilson's words? I have read them very carefully, and I think I can dimly guess in them a meaning which is not so offensive as that which they certainly convey; but that is not now my point. Whatever their meaning, and I will assume it to be compatible with

loyalty to the Anglican Church, is it possible to exaggerate the reckless uncharity of the words? What wanton offence it must give to feelings and beliefs which are legitimate, reasonable, and sincere!

Of course I know, and up to a certain point I sympathise with, the desire to bring back into the general usage of English Churchmen that venerable and noble name "Catholic," which the Prayer-Book constantly adopts, and which, to the educated and thoughtful Christian, carries such a freight of Christian traditions. I know, and I deprecate the obvious misconceptions which commonly underlie the use of the word "Protestant"; and I entirely approve all courteous and reasonable means for bringing more accurate ideas into current religious language. But how can I help repudiating with all my heart this reckless and abusive denunciation of a name, which is everywhere in English literature a synonym for truth and freedom, which stands for nothing less in the archives of mankind, which was habitually adopted by the honoured "Fathers" of the English Church? What a gulf parts Mr. Wilson's rhetoric from Bishop Cosin's grave and religious language:—

"But in what part of the world soever any Churches are extant, bearing the Name of Christ, and professing the true Catholic Faith and religion, worshipping and calling upon God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with one heart and voice, if any where I be now hindered actually to be joined with them, either by distance of countries, or variance amongst men, or by any other let whatsoever, yet always in my mind and affection I join and unite with them; *which I desire to be chiefly understood of Protestants*, and the best reformed Churches; for, where the foundations are safe, we may allow, and therefore most friendly, quietly, and peacably suffer, in those Churches where we have not authority, a diversity, as of opinion, so of ceremonies, about things which do but adhere to the foundations, and are neither necessary nor repugnant to the practice of the Universal Church" (*Works*, vol. iv. p. 572).

My Lord, if Mr. Wilson's Bradford speech stood alone, I should certainly not have adduced it in this Letter, but I know but too well that it is representative of a widely

extended clerical habit. The conscience of the ordinary Englishman revolts against these diatribes against Protestantism, and justly. No Church can afford to ignore the general conscience. I need not remind your Lordship how opposed such an attitude is to the teaching of Christianity. The supercilious, contemptuous tone in which the "Protestant" or the "mere Anglican" is referred to in Ritualist circles seems the very counterpart of that scornful "knowledge" which disregarded "weaker brethren," and earned the solemn censure of the great Apostle. "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling. . . . Let not then your good be evil spoken of: for the kingdom of God is not eating or drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another" (Rom. xv. 13, 17–19).

My Lord, I am not unconscious of the risks to which my present argument is exposed. It is an easy task to sweep aside as trivial, or exaggerated, or unfair, any of the instances which I adduce as illustrating the clerical contempt of the national conscience, which, I am contending, must be restrained if the present legal Establishment of Religion is to be preserved. The cumulative effect of acts, in themselves trivial, can be very great, and this is the case before us. The attitude of mind revealed in Mr. Wilson's speech at Bradford finds expression in a thousand forms, the general result of which is to isolate the clergy from the sympathy and confidence of good and religious people, and to build up between the Church and the conscience of the Nation a wall of partition.

The practical mischiefs which flow from the deep, and (I at least cannot honestly deny) not unfounded, suspicion of the clergy which has been thus built up in the popular mind, are very great. The difficulties of reform in certain directions are enormously increased. I will give but a single example. Reservation for the Sick is, as your Lordship is wont to insist, a primitive practice; it is also intrinsically reasonable, for

the extreme weakness of very ill or dying persons makes even a shortened Service very burdensome; but, *pace* your Lordship, it is by the law of the English Church forbidden, as we have been again reminded by the Archbishop. What is the real difficulty about getting the law altered? What is the real reason of the unanimous decision of the English Bishops (for nothing less seems behind the impressive unanimity of their Lordships' declarations on the subject) to suppress the practice? It is nothing else than the profound distrust of the clergy which both the general public and the Bishops feel: the former, led by a vague but strong instinct; the latter, guided by actual knowledge of the dominant tendencies in the Church, unite in suspecting that the liberty which is demanded in the interest of the sick, would certainly be used in the interest of liturgical developments borrowed from contemporary Romanism, which are not only grossly materialistic in themselves, but are also plainly opposed to the spirit and the letter of the Prayer-Book. Who can say that in this particular this suspicion is unjust or unreasonable? Personally, I applaud the practice of reservation, and, on grounds of practical convenience, I desire its restoration; but if such restoration is to bring into the Churches the Roman "Benediction," and processions of the "Host," and such developments of debased Sacramentalism, then I prefer the existing prohibition. And my own knowledge of the London churches, which, of course, is necessarily limited, makes me quite ready to believe that such results are highly probable.

IV. If the Church of England is to remain an Established Church, it can only be on condition that certain evident and exasperating abuses are removed.

No observer of the recent course of ecclesiastical politics can fail to be impressed by the rapid advance of the agitation inaugurated and maintained by the Church Reform League. Into the merits of the particular proposals advanced by the League I shall not here enter. It must suffice to say that, though I cordially sympathise with the idea of Reform, and hold very strongly that the Establishment itself is endangered by the continuance of certain abuses which weigh heavily on the popular conscience and do plainly run counter to the popular interest, yet that I cannot so far reconcile myself

to the avowed ideals of the Church Reform League as to become a member of that Association. Here I am only concerned to point out that the removal of abuses is a condition of the Establishment which must be faced. Parliament acts slowly, and with obvious difficulty; but it is the only adequate instrument of Church Reform which we possess, and therefore we should not be too ready to denounce its defects. Parliament, on the whole, has not deserved ill of the Church of England. Even the ill-starred Public Worship Regulation Act was mitigated by an Episcopal veto, which in the sequel has deprived it of all effect; and, in justice to the State, it must always be remembered, that that Act was passed in deference to the avowed wishes of the vast majority of English Churchmen. Parliament conferred an immense benefit on the Church when, in the teeth of clerical clamour, it constituted the Ecclesiastical Commission for the better administration and distribution of ecclesiastical property, and passed the Tithe Commutation Act. The recent Discipline and Patronage Acts have certainly been of great service, and I see no reason why all necessary practical Reforms should not be obtained from Parliament, if a reasonable temper of conciliation and compromise replace in Churchmen the intractable and contemptuous attitude which is now so common. Surely it ought to be possible to discuss practical questions in a practical spirit. Why must everything be treated in connection with irrelevant and exasperating beliefs, which may be lawful enough for the guidance of individuals, but cannot be usefully advanced in a practical discussion?

Here, my Lord, I may well bring my letter to a conclusion; for if in what I have already said my meaning has not been made clear, I cannot hope to remedy the fault by protracting my argument. Your Lordship must not resent a personal appeal; it is the consequence of an influence unique in character and extent that you should be held greatly responsible for the course of action which the High Church Party elects to follow at this juncture. I have tried without success to recall a parallel in our Ecclesiastical History to the position which you have won for yourself in the Church of England. That a layman should wield so ample an authority over thousands of the English clergy must be allowed to

constitute an impressive evidence of the respect which your Lordship's high and chivalrous character, transparent sincerity, and obvious courage have inspired. With that respect I beg to associate myself unreservedly, in spite of the fact that I have never acquiesced in the projects, or endorsed the ideals which, under your Lordship's influence, the High Church party has of late years pursued and made its own.

It is with the High Church Party that the decision rests on the great issue whether or not the Church of England shall remain, in the historic sense of the phrase, the National Church. The Low Church Party may be, and I am honestly bound to say that I think it is, guilty of larger and more fundamental departures from the spirit and letter of the Prayer-Book than its rival, but those departures have little political effect, because they coincide with the general sentiment of the Nation, and command the sympathy of the Nonconformist bodies. Moreover, the Low Church Party is evidently yielding, slowly, perhaps, but apparently, to the influence of the wider culture of modern life, and the silent formative force of the Formularies. The fanatical anti-Popery sentiment which swayed the party a generation ago is now largely extinct, and among the younger Evangelicals there is a deep and growing appreciation of the Catholic tone and teaching of the Prayer-Book. I would without anxiety leave the members of that party to the education of their circumstances as members of a Church which believes and worships as the Prayer-Book provides. This is my explanation, and I hope also my sufficient excuse, for leaving out of count, when the question of Establishment is at stake, that numerous, zealous, and powerful section of the National Church.

My Lord, you have publicly avowed yourself on many occasions the opponent of the policy of the Liberation Society: I appeal to you very earnestly to consider whether you are not indirectly and unintentionally contributing to the very disaster you deprecate and denounce. Your Lordship spoke with generous rhetoric of the pride of Englishmen in "the ancient Church of this land"; you said, and not untruly, that "they love her, and, far from wishing to degrade her, or to rob her, they desire nothing so much as to see her once

more the joy and praise of the whole earth." Yes, my Lord, that is true, only do not make the fatal mistake of crediting the English people with an antiquarian or transcendental conception of the Church. They are the most practical people in the world, the least governed by sentiment and emotion. They see nothing glorious or worthy in a Church which disowns her birthright, which proclaims that she has no distinctive principles, no rightful authority, which lives in the shadowy past, or guides her hesitating course by a parasitic imitation of foreign models. The Church which Englishmen will rejoice in and exult to possess, which they will rally to and champion against domestic treason and external attack, is that which commands the homage of their conscience, and wins, by self-sacrificing labour, the affection of their hearts. Your Lordship is too fond of the past, and, as is but too often the case with lovers, you clothe the object of your affection with the qualities you would yourself most desire to see in it. Even in the ardent words I have quoted, this note of imaginative archaism is audible. The English Church is "*once more*" to become "the joy and praise of the whole earth." Pray tell us, my Lord, when was that golden age? You could hardly refer to the primitive conversion in the sixth and seventh centuries, or the disastrous trials of the ninth, or the degraded secularism of the tenth and eleventh, or the brutal feudalism of the twelfth, or the extraordinary oppression of the thirteenth, or the profound debasement of the fourteenth and fifteenth, or the violent revolution of the sixteenth. Your Lordship's words earlier in the speech preclude the later period. What is the historic fact on which you rear the fabric of your ecclesiastical ideal? And by what right do you credit to the general body of Englishmen your own imaginative devotion? Do not misunderstand me, my Lord, I yield to no man in my love of the National Church; her history is my favourite study; her interest my constant anxiety; to bear her ministry is my greatest honour. I believe in the National Church as the most beneficent of the National Institutions; every instinct of patriotism is outraged by the proposal to degrade and pillage her; but this is not the deepest basis of my loyalty. The National Church commends herself to my conscience and reason as the

most faithful representative now existing in the world of that Divine Society which the Apostles planted, and which the primitive martyrs watered with their blood. I look back with reverent gratitude on her unexampled history; I look round with solemn apprehension on her unique opportunities; I look forward with exultation to her splendid possibilities. I can see her defects. They are, indeed, like the faults of the English people, very much on the surface. She corresponds to no preconceived theory of what a Church should be. Logic and symmetry are singularly absent from her system. She does not strike the imagination with the pomp of Rome, or the more archaic magnificence of the East. But she appeals more successfully than either to the conscience and the intellect of a just and liberty-loving people. She reflects the virtues and the faults of the English race, on which she has stamped indelibly her own distinctive image. The very aspect of the country certifies the modest, yet effectual character of the National religion. Everywhere, in obscure and remote hamlets not less than in thriving country towns and in populous cities, there rise parish churches, which amaze the visitor by their solidity, or entrance him by their sober beauty; but our cathedrals, when compared with the magnificence of the continental churches, are, with few exceptions, modest to the verge of meanness. Abroad it is otherwise; the general aspect of the churches is cheap and tawdry, but nothing can exceed the mingled splendour and solemnity of the cathedrals.

English Christianity eschews the striking effects of which continental religion is prodigal, but it is more thorough and robust, and perhaps covers a larger area of the national life. Even the failures of the National Church are not wholly without redeeming features. She has not bound up Christianity so closely with her own dogmas and claims as to leave the outraged conscience no choice between accepting the latter or abandoning the former. Her rebels go forth from her fellowship with no purpose of that profounder treason which on the Continent marks the revolting Catholic. The Nonconformist communities have therefore been ministerial to that great purpose of evangelising the English race which, it might have been supposed, their secession would have fatally

impeded. I confess that the modesty of the National Church, her reluctance to press her claims, her willingness to recognise the activities of the Eternal Spirit in other communions, seems to me no mean evidence of her genuinely Apostolic character. She might summarise her experiences and confess her inmost mind in the words of that great Apostle, who perhaps more than any other governs her thought: "Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the Gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole Prætorian guard, and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will; the one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel; but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds. What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Phil. i. 12–18).

My Lord, I appeal to you whether the points at issue can justify destroying the National Church; or (if you resent that absolute and terrible phrase, which yet I cannot think excessive) depriving the Church of England of the splendid vantage-ground for her spiritual work which her legal Establishment provides? It is with a certain melancholy amazement that I observe men taking up an intractable attitude on such trivialities as the ritual use of incense and the legality of reservation. Oh, my Lord, let us clear our minds of cant. What do these or any similar ceremonies count for in the scales of reality? Even more considerable contentions therein weighed seem petty enough. Your Lordship will brand as heretics those (among whom I must count myself) who *in the interest of Trinitarian Belief* would relegate the Athanasian Creed to an Appendix of the Prayer-Book, yet the effect of that proposal is already secured wherever High Churchmen have succeeded in substituting a Choral Celebration of Holy Communion for Morning Prayer. Why fight for the shadow, when you have already surrendered the substance?

English public opinion is very tolerant, and it grows more tolerant daily. Erastianism in the old sense is no longer a spiritual danger, the real peril lies in the opposite direction. There is a disposition among the average laity to make large allowance for the practical difficulties of the clergy. I am sure that the self-suppression of the High Church Party would not be misunderstood. I believe all generous and religious men would receive with intense satisfaction the prospect of an escape from the present crisis. A declaration from your Lordship frankly accepting the Archbishop's recent Charge as broadly defining the position of the National Church, and avowing your belief that within the lines of that position so defined, the High Church Party can and ought to work, would be altogether worthy of your Lordship's loyal and manly character, and infinitely acceptable to the great mass of English Churchmen. Short of such acceptance by both contending parties, I can see no reasonable prospect of any escape from the ruinous disaster to religion involved in the destruction of the National Status of the Church of England, and her impoverishment by the loss of the ancient ecclesiastical endowments.—I have the honour to be, My Lord, Your obedient servant,

H. HENSLEY HENSON.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE VISCOUNT HALIFAX.

THE HISTORY OF THE PASTORAL IDEAL WITHIN THE ENGLISH CHURCH SINCE THE REFORMATION

THE Reformation effected a revolution in the lives of the parochial clergy. Their occupation was in great measure destroyed when private Masses were abolished, guilds dissolved, and chantries confiscated. The numerous devotions of the Middle Ages were almost wholly swept away with the Images and the Altars. With the disappearance from the churches of the Reserved Sacrament, the sanctity and almost the *raison d'être* of those hallowed buildings seemed to have vanished. Private Confession almost wholly went out of use. The accustomed holy days were, for the most part, abrogated. The change in the life of the parish clergy was violent and complete. What was left for them to do? Preaching was the one ministerial function on which the Reformers laid stress, and it was but a poor substitute for all that they had swept away. We are not surprised to learn that a great disgust of religion swept over the nation in the wake of the religious changes, and that the first result of the Reformation was an appalling declension of the popular morality. Still it was in that evil time that the ideal of pastoral duty was conceived more justly and expressed more nobly than, perhaps, it has ever been before or since in the Church of England. The Reformed Ordinal issued in 1550, and included in the Prayer-Book of 1552, sets the pastoral aspect of the Christian Ministry in special prominence. The Mediæval Offices had, in the judgment of the Reformers, unduly exalted the sacerdotal to the obscuring of the pastoral aspect of the Ministry. In their reply to the Pope's Encyclical on Anglican Orders, the Archbishops have justly dwelt on the reason why such special prominence was given in the Reformed Ordinal to the latter.

"They, *i.e.* the Reformers, saw that the duties of the Pastoral Office had but little place in the Pontifical, although the Gospel speaks out fully upon them. For this reason, then, they especially set before our priests the Pastoral Office, which is particularly that of Messenger, Watchman, and Steward of the Lord, in that noble address which the Bishop has to deliver, and in the very serious examination which follows in words which must be read and weighed and compared with the Holy Scriptures, or it is impossible really to know the worth of our Ordinal."

Bishop Burnet does not overstate the fact when he says[1] that the Church of England, by the changes effected at the Reformation, "intended to raise the obligation of the pastoral care higher than it was before, and has laid out this matter more fully and more strictly than any Church ever did in any age." He especially refers to the questions addressed to the candidates for the Priesthood as constituting a complete and solemn statement of pastoral duty.

The Anglican theory of the Pastoral Office was admirable, but all the evidence we possess assures us that the pastoral practice of the Anglican clergy was long very unsatisfactory. The sacerdotal view which had been paramount in the Middle Ages, and had been emphatically affirmed by the Council of Trent, was much more easily carried into effect than the pastoral view of the Ministry which is enshrined in the Prayer-Book. To celebrate Sacraments and to hear Confessions ask little learning and less intelligence; but to teach and preach demand no mean proportion of both. We have a picture of the Pastoral Ideal as it presented itself to the Puritan Clergy of Elizabeth's reign (who were unquestionably the worthiest, if not the most reasonable and tractable, of the Order), in that curious book, Fuller's *Holy and Profane State* (published in 1642). Catechising, preaching, visitation of the sick,—"None of his flock shall want the extreme unction of prayer and counsel. Against the communion, especially, he endeavours that Janus's temple be shut in the whole parish, and that all be made friends,"—hospitality, and above all a strict and holy life, are the elements of pastoral duty. Fuller illustrates his picture of

[1] *Pastoral Care*, chap. vi.

"the faithful minister" by the example of William Perkins, preacher of St Andrew's parish in Cambridge, whose career was precisely synchronous with Queen Elizabeth's reign (1558–1608).

"What was said of Socrates, 'that he first humbled the towering speculations of philosophers into practice and morality'; so our Perkins brought the schools into the pulpit, and, unshelling their controversies out of their hard school terms, made thereof plain and wholesome meat for his people. For he had a capacious head, with angles winding and roomy enough to lodge all controversial intricacies; and had not preaching diverted him from that way, he had no doubt attained to eminency therein. An excellent surgeon he was at jointing of a broken soul and at stating of a doubtful conscience. And, sure, in case-divinity Protestants are defective. For (save that a Smith or two of late have built them forges and set up shop) we go down to our enemies to sharpen all our instruments, and are beholden to them for offensive and defensive weapons in cases of conscience."

Fuller indicates thus a very real disadvantage under which the Anglican clergy laboured. They had no recognised and sufficient access to their people as individuals. The sermon had to serve the purpose of casuistic guidance, as well as that of public instruction and exhortation. As the seventeenth century advanced there was a considerable revival of the practice of private Confession within the English Church; and the Presbyterians attempted to reach the same result by their system of Catechising. We shall recur to these points later on.

By the Canons of 1604 the parish priest was required to keep a close oversight of his flock. His ears were to be open to the slightest deviations from Anglican orthodoxy, and if he administered the Sacrament wittingly to any unorthodox person, he was liable to suspension (Can. 27). He was charged to maintain jealously the parochial principle, by detecting strangers who should present themselves for Communion, and to "remit such home to their own parish churches, there to receive the communion with the rest of their own neighbours" (Can. 28). A resident "beneficed

man" was required to preach one sermon every Sunday of the year (Can. 45). If, however, he was not a licensed preacher, he must "procure sermons to be preached in his cure once in every month at the least, by preachers lawfully licensed, if his living, in the judgment of the Ordinary, will be able to bear it." On other Sundays, he, or his curate, must read one of the homilies (Can. 46). Preachers were straitly enjoined not to attack one another in the pulpit (Can. 53). Every Sunday and holy day the parson was required "for half an hour or more" before evening prayer to "examine and instruct the youth and ignorant persons of his parish" (Can. 59). Once in three years the Bishop was to administer Confirmation (Can. 60), and the parson was to take special care that "none shall be presented to the bishop . . . but such as can render an account of their faith according to the Catechism" (Can. 61). He was to announce regularly and watch carefully the observance of all holy days and fasting days (Can. 64). He was, if the Bishop thought him equal to the task, and if not, he or the Bishop was to find a substitute, to "labour diligently" with any Popish recusants that might be resident in his parish, "thereby to reclaim them from their errors" (Can. 66). If any parishioner was "dangerously sick," the parson was to "resort unto him or her (if the disease be not known, or probably suspected, to be infectious), to instruct and comfort them in their distress, according to the Order of the Communion Book, if he be no preacher; or if he be a preacher, then as he shall think most needful and convenient" (Can. 67). He must not refuse or delay to christen any child brought to him, or to bury any corpse brought to the churchyard (Can. 68). He must hasten to baptize privately any sickly infant (Can. 69). His dress was exactly prescribed (Can. 74), and he was forbidden to resort to taverns or alehouses, to perform "base or servile labour," or to spend his time in unsuitable games (Can. 75).

The system of these Canons of 1604 looks well enough on paper, but we have abundant reason for thinking that in practice it was largely inoperative. The principal difficulty was still the lack of adequate men; for serious religion through the early half of the seventeenth century was still mainly

Puritan in discipline and Calvinist in doctrine, and the authorities of Church and State were hostile to both, especially the first. As the century advanced, Calvinism began to lose its hold on the religious intelligence of England. Arminianism spread from the Court to the clergy, and, after the political Revolution had discredited all things Puritan, to the religious laity; but up to the outbreak of the Civil War Calvinist views were general among the English clergy, and supreme among the laity. Puritan discipline, however, was associated with political disaffection in the view of statesmen and prelates. It was a standing conspiracy against that ecclesiastical uniformity which was the precious tradition of the Reformers, and the palladium of the public security. Thus the system of the National Church had to be worked by a set of men morally and intellectually inferior. This fact underlies the difficulties and explains the unpopularity of the Church almost to the end of the century. Baxter has recorded the deplorable ecclesiastical state of the country in his own boyhood. We have good reason to know that his experience was representative. It will be remembered that Baxter was born in Shropshire in the year 1615.

"We lived in a country that had but little preaching at all; in the village where I was born there were four readers[1] successively in six years time, ignorant men, and two of them immoral in their lives, who were all my schoolmasters. In the village where my father lived there was a reader of about eighty years of age that never preached, and had two churches about twenty miles distant. His eyesight failing him, he said

[1] Readers were laymen admitted in the absence of the clergy to conduct service and read homilies. "They were to serve in small livings, where there was no minister, and to supply till they were filled. They were not to preach, administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, nor baptize, but to read the Common Prayer and keep the registers. They were taken out of the laity, tradesmen, or others—any that was of sober conversation and honest behaviour, and that could read and write. They were to be of gravity to exhort the neighbourhood to love and unity, and to be peacemakers in any differences that might happen. They were to have salaries allowed them out of the fruits of the livings where they served, according to the discretion of the Bishops who sequestered the profits of such places. They seemed not wholly to forbear their callings, but were not countenanced to follow them, especially if they were mechanical. And they went in some grave habit, as might distinguish them from others" (*vid.* Strype, *Annals*, p. 307).

Common Prayer without book; but for the reading of the psalms and chapters he got a common thresher and day-labourer one year, and a tailor another year (for the clerk could not read well); and at last he had a kinsman of his own (the excellentest stage-player in all the country, and a good gamester and good fellow) that got Orders and supplied one of his places! After him another younger kinsman, that could write and read, got Orders; and at the same time another neighbour's son that had been a while at school turned minister, and who would needs go further than the rest, ventured to preach (and after got a living in Staffordshire); and when he had been a preacher about twelve or sixteen years, he was fain to give over, it being discovered that his Orders were forged by the first ingenious stage-player. After him another neighbour's son took Orders, when he had been a while an attorney's clerk, and a common drunkard, and tipled himself into so great poverty that he had no other way to live. It was feared that he and more of them came by their Orders the same way with the fore-mentioned person. These were the schoolmasters of my youth (except two of them), who read Common Prayer on Sundays and holy days, and taught school and tipled on the week-days, and whipt the boys when they were drunk, so that we changed them very oft. Within a few miles about us were near a dozen more ministers that were near eighty years old apiece, and never preached; poor ignorant readers, and most of them of scandalous lives. Only three or four constant competent preachers lived near us, and those (though conformable all save one) were the common marks of the people's obloquy and reproach, and any that had but gone to hear them, when he had no preaching at home, was made the derision of the vulgar rabble, under the odious name of a puritan."[1]

Archbishop Laud justifies his zeal for external discipline by pleading "that with the contempt of the outward worship of God, the inward fell away apace, and profaneness began boldly to show itself."[2]

It would be easy to multiply testimonies to the decayed condition of the clergy in the early part of the seventeenth

[1] *Life*, i. pp. 1, 2. [2] *Works*, iii. p. 408.

century. Then a twofold movement of reformation manifested itself. There was the ecclesiastical movement connected with the name of Archbishop Laud. It went back for its ideals and its methods to the primitive Church; it sought its instrument of reform in the power of the Crown; it worked from without, depressing individual initiative, centralising the Church administration, tending towards a rigid external uniformity. Its most attractive exponent is the poet priest GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1632), whose famous little treatise on the pastoral office, *A Priest to the Temple, or the Country Parson*, written in 1632 but not published until 1652, is an Anglican classic. The Laudian Movement triumphed at the Restoration, and contributed to the history of Anglicanism perhaps its most brilliant pages—those, I mean, which record the sufferings, labours, and virtues of the Caroline divines. Three names especially hold a prominent place in the history of the Pastoral Ideal—the names of three Bishops, Jeremy Taylor, Robert Sanderson, and Thomas Ken.

JEREMY TAYLOR (1613–1667) was, as all the world knows, the most splendid of English orators; but he had other claims to the homage of posterity. He is the sanest and sweetest of our devotional writers, the author of our one considerable treatise on moral theology as applied in casuistry, the most eloquent and conspicuous opponent of persecution in a persecuting age, a terrible controversialist in an age of controversy, a great Bishop in the golden age of English Episcopacy. In the history of the Pastoral Ideal his name is of first-rate importance. The two great sermons preached at Visitations, and entitled "*The whole Duty of the Clergy in Life, Belief, and Doctrine, described and pressed effectually upon their Consciences*," together with the "*Rules and Advices to the Clergy*," which seem to be a practical summary of the sermons, form a striking presentation of pastoral duty which may stand worthily alongside of the more formal treatises on the subject.

Jeremy Taylor's conception of the Pastoral Ideal was fashioned out of patristic and ascetic materials by the action of his own pure and fervid imagination. It must, perhaps, be remembered that his practical experience as a parish

priest was a very brief one, limited to the four years (1637–1642) during which he held the Rectory of Uppingham. Certainly he sets the standard of pastoral duty very high, and perhaps, when we remember the poor stuff of which the average clergy were then composed, we may doubt whether his glowing and lofty appeals did not miss the mark. However, no man could listen unmoved or unhumbled to such language as this—

"'*Ad majorem Dei gloriam*,' 'To do what will most glorify God,' that is the line you must walk by; for to do no more than all men needs must, is servility, not so much as the affection of sons; much less can you be fathers to the people, when you go not so far as the sons of God; for a dark lantern, though there be a weak brightness on one side, will scarce enlighten one, much less will it conduct a multitude, or allure many followers, by the brightness of its flame. And, indeed, the duty appears in this, that many things are lawful for the people which are scandalous in the clergy; you are tied to more abstinences, to more severities, to more renunciations and self-denials; you may not with that freedom receive secular contentments that others may; you must spend more time in prayers; your alms must be more bountiful, your hands more open, your hearts enlarged; others must relieve the poor, you must take care of them; others must show themselves their brethren, but you must be their fathers; they must pray frequently and fervently, but you must give yourselves up wholly to the word of God and prayer; they must 'watch and pray that they fall not into temptation,' but you must watch for yourselves and others too; the people must mourn when they sin, but you must mourn for your own infirmities and for the sins of others; and, indeed, if the life of a clergyman does not exceed even the piety of the people, that life is, in some measure, scandalous."[1]

Jeremy Taylor had learned in a hard school to avoid the worst tendencies of his time. His counsels are marked by a sterling good sense, which rarely suffers even his luxuriant fancy to carry him beyond the confines of reason and good taste. "He that understands nothing but his grammar," he

[1] *Works*, vol. vi. p. 505 [Heber's edition].

said, "and hath not conversed with men and books, and can see no farther than his fingers' ends, and makes no use of his reason, but for ever will be a child, he may be deceived in the literal sense of Scripture, but then he is not fit to teach others."[1] His warnings against mystical interpretations, and careless reading, and controversy in the pulpit, and obscurity and over-subtlety in sermons, are surely good for all times. I will confine myself to but one more quotation:

"Christian religion loves not tricks nor artifices of wonder, but, like the natural and amiable simplicity of Jesus, by plain and easy propositions leads us in wise paths to a place where sin and strife shall never enter. What good can come from that which fools begin, and wise men can never end but by silence? and that had been the best way at first, and would have stifled them in the cradle. What have your people to do whether Christ's body be in the Sacrament by consubstantiation or transubstantiation; whether purgatory be in the centre of the earth, or in the air, or anywhere, or nowhere? and who but a madman would trouble their heads with the entangled links of the fantastic chain of predestination? Teach them to fear God and honour the king, to keep the commandments of God and the king's commands, because of the oath of God; learn them to be sober and temperate, to be just and to pay their debts, to speak well of their neighbours, and to think meanly of themselves; teach them charity, and learn them to be zealous of good works. Is it not a shame that the people should be filled with sermons against ceremonies, and declamations against a surplice, and tedious harangues against the poor airy sign of the Cross in baptism? These things teach them to be ignorant; it fills them with wind, and they suck dry nurses; it makes them lazy and useless, troublesome and good for nothing."[2]

Jeremy Taylor's principal contribution to Pastoral Theology was his great casuistic treatise, *Ductor Dubitantium, or the Rule of Conscience*, the most elaborate and characteristic of all his writings, and that on which he himself believed that his reputation would rest. The preface is an historical document of considerable importance. He begins by pointing out that

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. vi. p. 511.

[2] *Ib.* pp. 523, 524.

the violent conditions of the Reformation had been unfavourable to the development, in the Reformed Churches, of a satisfactory moral theology—"that in the Reformed Churches there had been so great a scarcity of books of conscience; though it was not to be denied but the careless and needless neglect of receiving private confessions hath been too great a cause of our not providing materials apt for so pious and useful a ministration."

There were good reasons why English needs could not "be well supplied out of Roman storehouses," and therefore "it was necessary that cases of conscience should be written over anew, and established upon better principles, and proceed in more sober and satisfying methods." He disowns the design of providing "a collective body of particular cases of conscience"; his intention is rather to offer to the world a general instrument of moral theology, by the rules and measures of which, the guides of souls may determine the particulars that shall be brought before them," for "men will for ever need a living guide; and a wise guide of souls will, by some of these rules, be enabled to answer most cases that shall occur." He protests against the recklessness with which untrained and unsuitable men undertake the care of souls, and "run under the formidable burden of the preacher's office"; and invokes for himself the kindly construction of his readers.

It is evident that Jeremy Taylor attached great value to that personal dealing with souls which the practice of private confession made possible. In his advice to his clergy we find the following: "Let every minister exhort his people to a frequent confession of their sins, and a declaration of the state of their souls; to a conversation with their minister in spiritual things, to an inquiry concerning all the parts of their duty; for by preaching and catechising and private intercourse all the needs of souls can best be served, but by preaching alone they cannot."

In his own day ROBERT SANDERSON (1587–1662), for a short time in his old age Bishop of Lincoln, was regarded as the unquestionable chief of Anglican casuists. His *Cases of Conscience* are constantly referred to by the writers of the time. Here, however, I adduce him as a conspicuous example

of that Pastoral Ideal which commended itself to the disciples of the Laudian Movement. Izaak Walton in his *Life of Sanderson* has left us a charming picture of an admirable parish priest after the model of Herbert's *Country Parson.* The Rector of Boothby Pannel did not, however, share Herbert's view, that the country parson is rather unmarried than married. In a quaint passage Walton narrates Sanderson's deliberate determination to relieve the monotony of a country life by the society of a wife and the sweet distractions of a family. When we remember the revolution which clerical marriage has worked in the Pastoral Ideal, or rather in the pastoral practice of the English Church, it cannot be thought superfluous to notice that one of the most influential Anglican prelates of the golden age of Anglicanism preferred marriage to celibacy as the state of the rural priest. Prudence was, indeed, the distinction of Bishop Sanderson; unlike many of his brethren, he successfully held his benefice throughout the *undecima Persecutio* of the Commonwealth. It is, perhaps, a token of prudence, that though present at the Savoy Conference he held his tongue through the abortive discussions, and, being in the chair, gave his decision on a disputed point in favour of the majority. Anyway, in Boothby Pannel we are assured that "his parish, his patron, and he liv'd together in a religious love and a contented quietness"; that he "reconciled differences, and prevented lawsuits both in his parish and in the neighbourhood," often visited "sick and disconsolate families," and was generous in his alms to the poor.

Of THOMAS KEN (1637–1711) little need be said. His name serves to carry on the Laudian tradition to the eighteenth century, and the great disaster of the Non-juror schism, which broke the power of the High Church clergy not only by the actual loss of many devoted men, but also by affixing the stigma of political disaffection to the whole party.

Side by side with the Laudian Movement there proceeded the opposite movement, which triumphed for a brief space during the Commonwealth, and then was overtaken by the great disaster of the Restoration; but which left its mark on the Church of England, and, in the final result, contributed

perhaps more than its rival to the development of the Pastoral Ideal. What Jeremy Taylor is in the History of Anglicanism, that and more is RICHARD BAXTER in the History of Nonconformity. Both were leaders in many fields. As preachers, as controversialists, as divines, as casuists, as devotional writers, the two men invite comparison. Baxter's *Christian Directory* is in its way as considerable an achievement as Taylor's *Ductor Dubitantium;* his *Saints' Everlasting Rest* has enjoyed a popularity scarcely, if at all, inferior to that of the *Golden Grove;* while nothing that Taylor wrote on the Pastoral Office can exceed in power, originality, fervour, and wisdom his great treatise, *Gildas Salvianus, or the Reformed Pastor.* No composition of Taylor's corresponds to that pathetic and characteristic autobiography of Baxter's which was published after his death. I know no two books better worth a clergyman's study than these two (in my judgment) greatest works of Richard Baxter. Of the latter, Coleridge in his *Table Talk* is reported to have given this opinion: "It is an inestimable work. I may not unfrequently doubt Baxter's memory, or even his competence in consequence of his particular modes of thinking; but I could almost as soon doubt the Gospel verity as his veracity."

You will remember that RICHARD BAXTER (1615–1691) had been brought up under no favourable ecclesiastical conditions. His father was a Puritan Conformist, and he himself was bred a member of the Established Church. In due course he was ordained by Bishop Thornborough of Worcester, and for some while had no serious scruples about the Episcopal system to which he had attached himself. His doubts arose from the scandalous lack of discipline which he was compelled to observe on all hands in the Church. It must be remembered that at that time the Law compelled all parishioners above the age of sixteen years to receive the Holy Communion three times a year in the parish church according to the Rubric. The disreputable people could not quietly absent themselves, as is now the case; they must communicate, or be presented to the Bishop, and coerced by a troublesome suit before his Chancellor to do so. Excommunication was, from a religious point of view, totally useless. It was remitted on a formal profession of repentance and

penalties were regularly commuted for fines. Thus the convenience of the churchwardens combined with the conscience of the parish priest to ignore the misconduct of ill-living parishoners, who, at the legal intervals, profaned the Sacrament and scandalised the parish. There was no discipline, because the only tolerated disciplinary machinery was intolerable. It is necessary to explain so much in order to appreciate Baxter's position. "In all my life," he says, "I never lived in the parish where one person was publicly admonished, or brought to public penitence, or excommunicated, though there were never so many obstinate drunkards, whoremongers, or vilest offenders. Only I have known now and then one for getting a bastard, that went to the Bishop's court and paid their fees; and I heard of two or three in all the country, in all my life, that stood in a white sheet an hour in the Church; but the ancient discipline of the Church was unknown." Meanwhile the Church Authorities were bending all their energies to suppress Puritanism. "I must needs say," continues Baxter, "that I knew no place in these times where a man might not more safely have been drunken every week, as to their punishment, than to have gone to hear a sermon if he had none at home" (*Gildas Salvianus*, pp. 145, 147).

The Long Parliament had purchased the assistance of the Scots by taking the Covenant, with certain modifications, and establishing the Presbyterian system. Discipline was the very genius of Presbyterianism—thorough, ubiquitous, constant, inexorable discipline; but English traditions and the English temperament were alike hostile, and—as Mr. Shaw has recently shown in his invaluable work[1] on the religious history of this period—the system failed to establish itself. Nothing could have secured any measure of success for a system so alien to the national habits and so compromised by its Scottish origin, but the consistent and vigorous assistance of the State; but this condition was altogether prohibited by the rise of the Sectaries, who placed Oliver Cromwell in power, and swept aside the ecclesiastical

[1] *A History of the English Church during the Civil Wars and under the Commonwealth*, 1640–1660, by William A. Shaw, Litt.D., in two vols. Longmans, 1900.

monopoly claimed by the Presbyterians in deference to the new, and, as it then appeared, anarchic principle of toleration. Thus the attempt to set up the discipline, which north of the Tweed was working with such astonishing success, failed utterly. The parishioners would not elect elders at all in most places; where elders were elected, or appointed, by extra-parochial authority, their authority was set at naught. The ministers were in great perplexity. It was vital to their theory of a Church to guard the reception of the Sacrament by effective securities against abuse; but these were refused by the people, and not enforced by the State. Under these circumstances, in many places things reached a complete deadlock. The Sacraments were not administered at all. The reaction against the scandalous laxity of the old Episcopalianism, which the Long Parliament had abolished, had run to a different but not less scandalous result. "It is to the everlasting reproach of Presbytery"—observes Mr. Shaw very justly—"that such a state of things should have existed. As it was, the moral and common sense of a great part of the clergy were strong enough to see the undesirability of such neglect of ordinary Church Ordinances, and it was this perception on their part which led to the voluntary associations from 1653 onwards."[1]

Baxter explains the origin of the network of voluntary associations, of which he was the centre, in his *Autobiography*. The religious anarchy prevailing on all sides at first moved him to various private attempts to effect a *modus vivendi*; at length the necessity of his own flock at Kidderminster induced more public efforts.

"Next this, the state of my own congregation, and the necessity of my duty, constrained me to make some attempt. For I must administer the Sacraments to the Church, and the ordinary way of examining every man before they come, I was not able to prove necessary, and the people were averse to it, so that I was forced to think of the matter more seriously; and having determined of that way I thought most agreeable to the Word of God, I thought, if all the ministers did accord together in one way, the people would much more easily submit, than to the way of any minister that was singular."

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 152.

Baxter drew up articles of association, which the clergy subscribed, and thus was set in motion a voluntary system of discipline which, beyond all question, greatly improved the religious state of the parishes into which it was introduced. On 4th December 1655 the associated clergy arranged to meet together at Worcester, "and there to join in such humiliation, and in earnest prayer to God for the pardon of their neglects, and for His special assistance in the work that they had undertaken." Baxter was asked to preach, and accordingly prepared a discourse for the occasion; but, when the time came, he was too ill to deliver it. This undelivered sermon was the nucleus of the great treatise, rather oddly named from two ancient censors of the clergy, *Gildas Salvianus.*

Everywhere this remarkable work glows with the eager spirit of the author, his intense conviction of Divine commission, his fierce contempt for clerical pretence, his personal unselfishness, his passion for souls. He continually refers to his own experience, and offers his brethren the assistance of his own example. Thus he presents a curiously interesting picture of religious life from the clergyman's standpoint at that strange juncture in the national history. Catechising and preaching are the two great instruments of pastoral work; not mere catechising of children, but a personal instruction of every communicant in the parish. House to house visitation is little esteemed. "Nor do I make it" (he says) "a minister's duty absolutely to go up and down from house to house, to each house in his parish, or of his charge, I would not so much as advise you to do this without necessity; but first call the people to come to you, and learn of you at your own house, or the Church-house, or where you please, so that you will but give them that personal instruction, upon necessary pre-inquiry into their states, which their conditions do require."[1]

Baxter explains very carefully how catechising is to be introduced into a parish. The parson must begin by instructing his people from the pulpit the reasons and advantages of the practice, must "show them that they must come to the congregation as scholars to school, and must be content to give an account of their learning, and be instructed man by man."[2] Having thus paved the way, the next step is to

[1] *Works*, ed. Orme, vol. xiv. p. 363. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 316.

provide every family in the parish with a copy of the printed Catechism, which has been chosen as the basis of instruction.

"In delivering them, the best way is for the minister first to give notice in the congregation that they shall be brought to their houses, and then go himself from house to house and deliver them, and take the opportunity of persuading them to the work; and as you go, take a catalogue of all the persons at years of discretion in the several families, that you may know whom you have to take care of and instruct, and whom to expect when it cometh to their turn. I have formerly" (he continues) "in the distributing of some books among them, desired every family to fetch them; but I found more confusion and uncertainty in that way; but in small parishes either way may serve. And for the charges of the books, if the minister be able, it will be well for him to bear it; if not, the best affected of his people of the richer sort should bear it among them; or on a day of humiliation preparatory to the work, let the collection that is wont to be for the poor be employed to buy Catechisms, and the people be desired to be more liberal, and what is wanting the well-affected to the work may make up. And for the order of proceeding in small parishes, the matter is not great; but in greater it will be needful that we take them in order, family by family, beginning the execution a month or six weeks after the delivery of the books, that they may have time to learn; and thus taking them together in common, they will the more willingly come, and the backward will be the more ashamed to keep off."[1]

Many excellent counsels are given as to the treatment of the dull, the nervous, the aged, whose will is excellent but whose memories are hopeless. Tact, patience, love are the notes of true catechising. "A soul is so precious, that we should not lose one for want of labour; but follow them while there is any hope, and not give them up as desperate, till there is no remedy. Before we give them over as dogs or swine, let us try the utmost, that we may have the experience of their obstinate contempt or renting us, to warrant our forsaking them. Charity suffereth long and is kind."

Baxter proceeds to explain the actual method which ex-

[1] *Ib.* pp. 316, 317.

perience had taught him to adopt. At their appointed time the families appeared at his house, all in rotation coming on the two catechising days set apart in every week. He began by a brief address "to demulce their minds" and prepare them for the ensuing instructions. Then he took the members separately, "for some cannot speak freely before others, and some cannot endure to be questioned before others," but, mainly, his reason for such separate dealing was that he found people could speak and be spoken to about their sins more usefully in private. So he would leave the rest of the family in one room, while he had his conference with one alone in another; except in the case of women, when to avoid scandal he always had others present in the room, though, by lowering his voice, and making sure that the persons present were such as the catechumen or penitent would probably welcome, or at least not resent, he tried to minimise the inevitable disadvantage of this arrangement.[1]

As to the results of this elaborate system, Baxter writes with great confidence. Preaching, he discovered, was a very unsatisfactory instrument for the teaching of Christian folk. He found his regular hearers lamentably and amazingly ignorant. "I have found by experience that an ignorant sot that hath been an unprofitable hearer so long, hath got more knowledge and remorse of conscience in half an hour's close discourse, than they did from ten years' public preaching."[2] Moreover, a duly catechised congregation was capable of receiving benefit from preaching of which ordinary hearers had no conception. Burnet relates that when he and certain other Episcopal divines were sent by Leighton into the western counties of Scotland to preach to the disaffected congregations, and endeavour to persuade them to moderate their antipathy to the ecclesiastical system established by the law, they were astonished at the theological knowledge displayed by the peasantry. "We were, indeed, amazed to see a poor commonalty so capable of arguing upon points of government, and on the bounds to be set to the power of princes in matters of religion; upon all these topics they had texts of Scripture at hand, and were ready with their answers to anything that was said to them. This measure of know-

[1] *Ib.* p. 320. [2] *Ib.* p. 276.

ledge was spread even among the meanest of them, their cottagers, and their servants."[1]

The effectiveness of the system, where it was carried out thoroughly and regularly for several years, as was the case at Kidderminster, must have been great; but was it a system which could be generally applied? did it not depend too much on the zeal, wisdom, and ability of the individual clergyman? Baxter was no ordinary man; yet we may safely say that Baxter alone could have made this system really satisfactory. In the hands of the average clergyman it would quickly sink into an intolerable infliction or a lifeless form. Baxter's contribution to the history of the Pastoral Ideal was not the successful introduction of the parochial method, which he so earnestly practised and so passionately advocated; but the example he gave to his own generation, and left on record to posterity, of the pastoral life. He stood midway between the two great contending views of Church organisation. His evangelistic ardour drew him to the parochial system, which, with whatever faults, assumed that the clergyman had a direct mission to the whole population of the parish. He could not acquiesce in a view which, however otherwise reasonable, left the bulk of the people outside the activities of the clergy. On the other hand, his austere ideal of Christian holiness, his righteous loathing of the hypocrisies of the Established system, his intense conviction that morality was the very mark of a Church,—all led him to look with kindness on that notion of "gathered Churches" which was common both to the Independents and the Anabaptists. He endeavoured to combine the opposed views in his system at Kidderminster. He applied the close, personal discipline of a congregation to a parish. Great as his success was, it fell so far short of what he needed to justify his position, that his attempt must be described as a splendid failure. Of the 1400 Church members in Kidderminster, only 600 accepted his government: for the rest he had no effectual system. He would not coerce to Communion as the Bishops had done; he would suppress by the magistrate's authority the open violation of the Moral Law, which the Bishops had professed to desire.

[1] *History of his own Time*, p. 196, London, 1883.

but had never seriously attempted. When the State was hostile, even this necessary measure of coercion failed to be possible. He was surely drifting into the position of the sectaries whom he loathed. Perhaps the conflict between parochialism, with its territorial basis of ecclesiastical rights, and Christianity, with its personal basis, is not capable of satisfactory appeasement. It must be recognised that the parish priest combines in his person two sets of duties. He is a pastor, and he is a State official; he is the minister of Christ, and the servant of the nation. Baxter could never thus divide his personality; he was altogether and exclusively a consecrated person. Hence the unreconciled contradictions of his conception of pastoral duty. There is an extremely interesting correspondence between Baxter and Owen, the famous Independent, which throws much light on Baxter's notions as to parochial government. He states "the great things which hinder the Presbyterians and Moderate Episcopal men from closing with" the Independents. The first is the schismatic tendency of the sectarian method; the next is the implied neglect of parish religion.[1] It is a very just criticism of Independency from the standpoint of a man who is content to take his stand wholly on practical considerations.[1]

Before leaving Baxter, I would point out that he was one of the first, if not absolutely the first, to make the distribution of religious literature a regular part of parochial work. This method of disseminating religious knowledge was much used during the Church revival which followed the Revolution, and ran its course into the middle of the eighteenth century. BISHOP GIBSON, in his well-known charge to the London clergy in 1741–1742, counsels the distribution of "small tracts against particular vices and the more notorious defects in duty." He reminds the clergy that the S.P.C.K. provided a great variety of such tracts, and sold them to members at half price. "And that no part of my diocese might want the convenience of being furnished with them as they see occasion, the incumbents of the several market towns have readily agreed to take the trouble of becoming members of the Society, and so have put themselves in a condition to furnish their

[1] See *Autobiography*, pt. iii. p. 67.

neighbours, whether clergy or laity, with as many as they shall need."

The ejection of the Nonconformists in 1662 must be regarded not merely as a barbarous measure in itself, but also as very injurious to the spiritual character of the Church of England. The Cavalier clergy were not an estimable body, as a whole. The brilliant divines of the Caroline Epoch blind the historian to the poor quality of the rank and file. The eviction of nearly two thousand excellent and conscientious clergymen, many of whom were also learned and able, and who certainly, taken all together, formed the salt of the parish clergy, was itself a great blow to serious religion. The conditions under which the new incumbents took office must have been extremely unfavourable to their religious influence. Abuse of the evicted incumbent was in too many cases the staple of the new preaching. In 1663 a book appeared under the title of *Ichabod*, which at a later period was republished as the work of Bishop Ken, and which Dean Plumptre thinks was probably an early piece of that admirable prelate. This book states that of 12,000 livings in the Church, 3000 were impropriate, and 4165 suffered from non-residence. All the Episcopal Charges and Visitation Sermons of the period that I have read, speak with no uncertain sound on the subject of the degraded condition of the clergy. I doubt whether the Church revival after the Revolution had much effect on the mass of the rural incumbents. In London, certainly, there was a marked change for the better. The Latitudinarian clergy of that period were not so much men of lax theological views, as men who exalted the superior importance of practical religion. I submit that these early Latitudinarians were the spiritual descendants of the evicted Presbyterians, with the leaders of whom they maintained close and friendly relations. Leighton and Burnet were both bred under Presbyterian influences, and carried on the pastoral tradition of the Presbyterians.

BISHOP BURNET (1643–1715) has a great place in the history of the Pastoral Ideal in England. His admirable *Discourse of the Pastoral Care*, published in 1692, and his eloquent *Conclusion* to the *History of his own Times*, written in 1708, are documents which no clergyman ought to

neglect. In the latter he sets on record his conviction that parochial indolence was the conspicuous fault of the English clergy: they were not, for the most part, scandalous, but they were painfully lazy. "If," he says, "to a virtuous life clergymen would add a little more labour, not only performing public offices and preaching to the edification of the people, but watching over them, instructing them, exhorting, reproving, and comforting them, as occasion is given, from house to house, making their calling the business of their whole life, they would soon find their own minds grow to be in a better temper, and their people would show more esteem and regard for them, and a blessing from God would attend upon their labours. I say it with great regret, I have observed the clergy in all the places through which I have travelled, Papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Dissenters, but, of them all, our clergy are much the most remiss in their labours in private, and the least severe in their lives."[1] He says that "the Dissenters have a much larger share of knowledge among them than is among those who come to our churches." He urges more assiduous catechising of the young, "short and plain sermons upon a large portion of Scripture," and parochial visitation. Substantially it is the method of *Gildas Salvianus* adapted by an experienced man of the world to the actual conditions of parochial work. Services, guilds, sacraments have little place in the scheme; these were the favourite instruments of that High Church party which had revived the Laudian notions of clerical duty, and was working with great fervour though under the cloud of political suspicion, and with the grave and perplexing

[1] DEAN SWIFT, in that astonishing satire, *The Beast's Confession to the Priest*, written in 1732, gibes at the servility of the chaplains, at that time a numerous class, including the principal rural incumbents—

"The Chaplain vows, he cannot fawn,
Though it would raise him to the Lawn:
He pass'd his Hours among his books;
You find it in his meagre looks:
He might if he were worldly wise,
Preferment get, and spare his eyes:
But owned, he had a stubborn spirit,
That made him trust alone in merit:
Would rise by merit to Promotion;
Alas a mere chymerick Notion."

circumstance that the Bishops regarded its opinions with dislike and its activity with suspicion. The two conceptions of pastoral duty, which, from the time of the breach with mediævalism, had divided the allegiance of the English clergy, were never more sharply distinguished than in the early Hanoverian period, when the cleavage seemed to correspond with political opinion. Episcopalianism as a spiritual system was at its lowest after the middle of the century. The general deadness of the time—which affected the Dissenters perhaps even more disastrously than the Church—co-operated with the unhappy divergence of political sympathy between the Bishops and the rural clergy to bring the Church system as nearly as possible to complete paralysis.

The administration of patronage on the most secular considerations is vigorously denounced by COWPER in *Tirocinium, or a Review of Schools*, published in 1785—

"Church-ladders are not always mounted best
By learned clerks and Latinists professed.
The exalted prize demands an upward look,
Not to be found by poring on a book.
Small skill in Latin, and still less in Greek,
Is more than adequate to all I seek.

. . . . . .

Let reverend churls his ignorance rebuke
Who starve upon a dog's-ear'd Pentateuch:
The parson knows enough who knows a Duke.

. . . . . .

The royal letters are a thing of course,
A king, that would, might recommend his horse;
And deans, no doubt, and chapters with one voice,
As bound in duty, would confirm the choice.
Behold your bishop! well he plays his part,
Christian in name and infidel in heart,
Ghostly in office, earthly in his plan,
A slave at court, elsewhere a lady's man.
Dumb as a senator, and as a priest
A piece of mere church furniture at best;
To live estranged from God his total scope,
And his end sure, without one glimpse of hope." [1]

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[1] For the best apology for all this which an acute and in his way even a religious man could invent, we may turn to ARCHDEACON PALEY'S sermon on "A distinction of Orders in the Church defended upon principles of public utility," preached in 1782 at the consecration of an Irish Bishop.

No doubt there were many pious and devoted clergymen scattered up and down the land; there were many more respectable and useful men who promoted an unostentatious virtue in their parishes. The piety of Oliver Goldsmith has immortalised one parish priest of this dismal period of our ecclesiastical history. We may be sure that "sweet Auburn" was not the only village which enjoyed the ministrations of such a "village preacher" as the poet has described—

> "A man he was to all the country dear,
> And passing rich with forty pounds a year."

The pastoral traits which are mostly dwelt on are those which have least connection with the Church system—almsgiving, hospitality, sympathy, visitation of the sick, the personal charm of a sweet and lovable man.

> "At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
> His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
> Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
> And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.
> The service past, around the pious man,
> With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
> E'en children follow'd with endearing wile,
> And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile.
> His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,
> Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress'd;
> To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
> But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven."[1]

The "Deserted Village" was published in 1769. In the following year WILLIAM WORDSWORTH was born. His references to the rural clergy may be compared with the charming picture of consecrated benevolence to which reference has just been made. Still the dominant elements in the Pastoral Ideal are personal and domestic, not official or sacerdotal. Thus in

[1] But Goldsmith has some smart strokes at the clergy in his "Citizen of the World," *e.g.* Letter xxvi.: "To be obliged to wear a long wig when I liked a short one, or a black coat when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty, that I absolutely rejected the proposal [*i.e.* to go into Orders]. A priest in England is not the same mortified creature with a bonze in China; with us, not he that fasts best, but eats best, is reckoned the best liver; yet I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration but that boyish one of dress." See also his descriptions of visits to Westminster Abbey (Letter xiii.) and S. Paul's (Letter xl.).

the "Ecclesiastical Sketches" we have the following description of pastoral character:—

> "A genial hearth, a hospitable board
> And a refined rusticity, belong
> To the neat mansion, where, his flock among,
> The learned pastor dwells, their watchful lord,
> Though meek and patient as a sheathéd sword,
> Though pride's least lurking thought appear a wrong
> To human kind: though peace be on his tongue,
> Gentleness in his heart; can earth afford
> Such genuine state, pre-eminence so free,
> As when, arrayed in Christ's authority,
> He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand;
> Conjures, implores, and labours all he can
> For re-subjecting to Divine command
> The stubborn spirit of rebellious man."

This is the portrait of a cultivated and well-endowed clergyman, probably a member of a county family, and holding the family living.

In the fifth book of the "Excursion" the honourable descent and local connections of the clergyman are directly included in his pastoral equipment.

We read of the

> "turreted manorial hall
> . . . in which the good man's ancestors
> Have dwelt thro' ages—patrons of this cure."

But Wordsworth knew that this type of clergyman by no means universally prevailed. In "The Brothers" he describes a rural parson who is also a farmer—

> " . . . . . he sate
> Upon the long stone seat beneath the eaves
> Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,
> Employ'd in winter's work. Upon the stone
> His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,
> While, from the twin cards, tooth'd with glittering wire,
> He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
> With back and forward steps."

This type corresponds more closely with the *Vicar of Wakefield,* after he had lost his money.

CRABBE published *The Borough* in 1810. There, in "The Vicar" and "The Curate," we have contemporary portraits painted from the life by a keen observer—

"Now rests our Vicar. *They who knew him best,*
Proclaim his life t'have been entirely rest;
Free from all evils which disturb his mind,
Whom studies vex and controversies blind.
The rich approved,—of them in awe he stood;
The poor admired,—they all believed him good;
The old and serious of his habits spoke;
The frank and youthful loved his pleasant joke;
Mothers approved a safe contented guest,
And daughters one who back'd each small request:
In him his flock found nothing to condemn;
Him sectaries liked,—he never troubled them;
No trifles fail'd his yielding mind to please,
And all his passions sunk in early ease;
Nor one so old has left this world of sin,
More like the being that he enter'd in."[1]

A master-hand has described the "typical clergyman" of the præ-Evangelical period. "He was often much, very much to the society around him. When communication was so difficult and infrequent, he filled a place in the country life of England which no one else could fill. He was often the patriarch of his parish, its ruler, its doctor, its lawyer, its magistrate, as well as its teacher, before whom vice trembled, and rebellion dared not show itself. The idea of the priest was not quite forgotten; but there was much—much even of what was good and useful—to obscure it. The beauty of the English Church in this time was its family life of purity and simplicity; its blot was quiet worldliness."[2]

There can be little doubt, I think, that only after the Revolution, the full effect of clerical marriage on the pastoral work of the clergy became apparent. Clerical celibacy was generally admired, and very commonly practised, during the seventeenth century. LORD BACON'S well-known essay, *Of Marriage and Single Life*, expressed the general judgment of cultivated men: "He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men, which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public. . . . *A single life doth well with Churchmen, for charity will hardly*

[1] *Works*, ii. p. 83. [2] Church, *Oxford Movement*, p. 3.

water the ground where it must first fill a pool. . . . Certainly, wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men, though they be many times more charitable because their means are less exhaust, yet, on the other side, they are most cruel and hard-hearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon." The ascetic tendency of the Laudian Movement co-operated with the intense spiritual zeal of the best Puritans to discourage the marriage of the clergy. It is yet another point of resemblance between Jeremy Taylor and Baxter, that both counselled celibacy and practised matrimony. After the Revolution such respect for celibacy as remained was the mark of Non-jurors, and accordingly discredited with the ruling powers. Burnet (as Dean Swift cruelly reminds him) had been thrice married; and Butler's celibacy probably strengthened the ridiculous notion that he was a Papist. Clerical marriage had a twofold influence. On the one hand, it distinctly tended to despiritualise the clergyman's life. He sank into the general category of citizens; he lived as they; the Vicarage or Rectory was his private house, as truly his "castle" against parochial visitations as any layman's against the intrusion of strangers; between the parson and his people stood the parson's family, and that might, or might not, facilitate intercourse between them; in any case it changed its character. On the other hand, the clerical family became an important factor in the distribution of patronage. The common law, which operates everywhere in the direction of stereotyping the occupations of the people in family grooves, was effectual here also. The clergy became very largely a hereditary class; the parson-born clergy were well placed for the enjoyment of that large part of the patronage which was vested in clerical hands. It cannot, I think, be doubted that nepotism is the inevitable accompaniment of clerical patronage; and, where clerical marriage exists, the nepotism, if less disreputable than otherwise would be the case, will probably be not less shameless, and far more extensive. Social influences have found in the clergyman's wife a medium through which to affect the clergy; and the general effect in the course of a few generations has been the almost complete destruction of the notion of spiritual re-

sponsibility attaching to patronage. We may adduce a hostile, but not, I think, substantially untrue account of the English clergy about the middle of this century; it is the work of IGNATIUS VON DÖLLINGER.

"The clergy of the Episcopal Church themselves proceed from the higher classes, and are by relationship or marriage intimately connected with them; it is only very seldom that clergymen of the Church have sprung from the lower orders; and whoever does not belong by birth and connection to the privileged classes, generally finds the door of ecclesiastical preferment closed against him. The patronage is mostly in the hands of the nobility and gentry, who regard the Church as a means of provision for their younger sons, sons-in-law, and cousins. Its patronage partly belongs to the Crown, the Bishops, and the Universities, who also usually provide for their own. Besides the rich beneficed clergy, however, there is a subordinate poor class of curates, who perform service for the more numerous classes of sinecurists and pluralists, and very commonly do this for very slender emoluments. The son of a family of the lower order might perhaps attain to the position of a curate, but there is no Christian country where the poor and humble are so much excluded from the higher schools and educational establishments—and thereby, of course, from the Church and the service of the State—as in England."[1]

Of course this account is marked by obvious prejudice, and certainly, during the last half century, some improvement has been effected; but in the main it still remains true. There has established itself among us a conception of the clergyman's duty which assumes that he must take an important place in society on equal terms with his lay neighbours; the modest endowments of the Church are quite unequal to the provision of the requisite income; therefore he must provide the money from his own private resources. The most important parishes in the country, generally endowed with an official income which in any other country would be considered adequate, if not ample, are now by common consent classed among those benefices for which private fortune is an indispensable condition of tenure. I do not

[1] *The Church and the Churches*, p. 144.

dwell further on this gross anomaly, which is bringing back in a new and more respectable, but in the long run not less disastrous, form the ancient plague of Simony. Suffice it to point out that the root of the mischief lies in that conception of the pastoral office which was the direct consequence of clerical marriage. Some excellent people have thought that by recognising a quasi-official character in the clergyman's wife, and pressing the religious responsibility attaching to his matrimonial choice, they will be able to abate the secularising influence of clerical marriage. There is, for example, a very earnest chapter on "The Minister's Wife" in a book on the Christian ministry, originally published in 1829, which appears to have had a considerable circulation.[1] "There is, or ought to be, this difference between a Christian and a Ministerial Choice: a Christian wants a help-meet for himself —a minister wants *besides* a yoke-fellow in his work; he wants for his people as well as for himself" (p. 170). Most true, without doubt; but human nature is an obstinate thing, and experience justifies the belief that all such wise counsels count for nothing in the matter of marriage.

It must not be forgotten, of course, that there are broad justifications of clerical matrimony which may not wisely or safely be ignored, nor do I suppose that the Church of England is ever likely to go back on the decision of the Reformation with respect to that matter. I hope, however, it is not extravagant to desire a change of sentiment with regard to celibacy. The Pastoral Ideal has been dangerously compromised by those irrelevant domestic ambitions which, however laudable in themselves, cannot be rightly indulged within the ranks of the clergy. Is it too much to ask for some better securities against precipitate and unsuitable marriages? May we not adopt Baxter's attitude, even if, in the end, we decide to follow his example? "Ought a clergyman to marry?" he asks. And he answers, "Yes; but let him think, and think, and think again before he does it." Is it excessive, in view of the overwhelming difficulties which now face the Church, the alienated multitudes in the great towns, the dissolving fabric of rural society, the spread of Socialist and unbelieving views among the people, the poverty

[1] *The Christian Ministry*, by Rev. Charles Bridges, 5th edition, 1839.

of the Church at home, the enormous and expanding necessities of its work abroad,—to apply the principles and urge the example of S. Paul?

Quite recently there has revealed itself a tendency to superimpose on the parish priest the character of a Hebrew prophet, or at least of a tribune of the people. The clergyman is to regard himself as Divinely-commissioned to reform the world by the directest means available. He is to include in his parochial activities the organisation of industry, perhaps the conduct of a labour agitation, or even the management of a strike. I shall not repeat here what, in season and out of season, I have urged elsewhere. It must suffice to say that I cannot find any authority in the New Testament, or any encouragement in Church History, for this revision of the Pastoral Ideal. In the complex system of civilised society, the clergyman has a sufficiently difficult rôle in satisfying the undoubted obligations of his sacred office. He should be reluctant to take on himself fresh obligations, for which he cannot be thought to have natural aptitude, and which must distract him from his proper task. In any case, I decline to accept the functions of the politician, the economist, the agitator, and the strike leader as rightly included in the ministerial commission. *Necessitas non habet legem;* there may be crises at which a clergyman may find himself evidently required by his duty to undertake any or all of these; in like manner, he may find himself compelled at a pinch to wage war or carry on trade. But the devices of a crisis must not be made the precedent of common life. Necessity, we know, is the mother of invention; I decline to accept it as the sufficient voucher for novel principles.

It remains that I should inquire how far the Evangelical Movement within the Church, which was not the least considerable result of Methodism, has affected the Pastoral Ideal. I confess that I do not regard that movement quite so admiringly as is usually the case. It seems to me to have been astonishingly weak on the intellectual side, to have been dangerously limited in its range as a spiritual system, and to have distinctly lowered the pastoral standard of the English clergy. "Preaching the Gospel" became almost the whole duty of the parish priest. Endless religious talk in prayer-

meetings, missionary meetings, preachings of all kinds carried on in churches, rooms, and the open air, constituted the Alpha and Omega of Evangelical method. There was nothing constructive, nothing stable, nothing organised to continue and develop. The movement was hampered by the ecclesiastical system into which it had been injected. Its freest action and most considerable achievements have been found in the Nonconformist bodies. Indirectly, by raising the level of the religious life in the Church, and deepening devotion, the Evangelical Movement ministered to the revival amongst us of the Pastoral Ideal; but directly it was without effect. In the history of the Pastoral Ideal, Evangelicalism is a blank. For good and for evil the Oxford Movement was a reaction. It reasserted the old Anglican ideas, and it rekindled pastoral enthusiasm; but it never really sympathised with the conditions of modern England, and tended from the first to run into mediæval and Roman developments which were either altogether anachronistic or definitely mischievous. It is, however, as yet premature to attempt to summarise the results of a movement which has not yet wholly run its course. One thing, however, is already clear, namely, that neither Evangelicalism nor its rival has contributed a solution of the problem which now faces the Church of England—how to combine a faithful service of the Pastoral Ideal of Anglican tradition with the novel intellectual, political, and social conditions of the modern time.

SERMONS

A Paper read at the Church Congress, Brighton, October 1901

THE subject which I am charged to speak about is one which, whatever may be the case with others, must be to the thoughtful clergyman full of anxious and, perhaps, painful interest. It is, of course, notorious that in certain quarters it is now fashionable to make little of sermons, or, as the cant term is, "preachments." I desire to repudiate with all the energy I have this fashion of belittling the highest function of the Christian ministry. If it be the case, and no doubt it is the case but too often, that sermons merit the scorn which they provoke, then I submit that the reason lies in that low conception of ministerial duty which makes preaching a trivial and despised thing. Consider what the sermon means in the scheme of the clergyman's duty. So far as the mass of his congregation is concerned, his ministry as teacher and as pastor must be fulfilled in those brief moments during which he speaks to them face to face in his Master's Name. I am not, of course, suggesting that this is a satisfactory state of affairs. Preaching can never adequately express our obligation as teachers and pastors. Baxter's declaration probably sums up the general experience: "I know that the public preaching of the Gospel is the most excellent means, because we speak to many at once, but otherwise it is usually far more effectual to preach it privately to a particular sinner; for the plainest man that is can scarcely speak plain enough in public for them to understand, but in private we may much more. In public, we may not use such homely expressions, or repetitions, as their dulness doth require, but in private we may."[1]

[1] See *Gildas Salvianus*, chap. vi., *Works*, ed. Orme, xiv. p. 276.

But, as a matter of fact, there will be no other way of teaching than the sermon, so far as the mass of the congregation is concerned, and such opportunities of private instruction as come to the clergyman will almost invariably grow out of his preaching. Pastoral visitation is, no doubt, a most precious instrument of spiritual influence, but the circumstances of modern society do not always, or generally, permit its use. Visitation of some sort will, no doubt, always be possible, but not pastoral visitation. The social conditions assumed by the great masters of pastoral theology—George Herbert, Baxter, Jeremy Taylor, Bishop Burnet—have disappeared over much of the country, and will soon have disappeared altogether. However reluctantly we may admit it, admit it we must in the end, that our hold over the people depends mainly upon our sermons. It must be our interest, as it certainly is our duty, to set a high standard of preaching before us, and to resist as an insult and a peril the modern fashion of belittling the pulpit.

Now, it cannot be questioned that the influence of the pulpit has fallen to a very low ebb. Publishers with one voice assure us that there is no market for sermons. This fact is a fair index of unpopularity. When men crowded to hear sermons, they were eager to purchase them. Now they are zealous neither to hear nor to possess. Sermons were once events, they are now hardly episodes. After some consideration, I cannot recall the name of a single preacher now living—and I do not forget that we have among us on and off the Episcopal Bench many respectable orators—whose sermons make the slightest ripple on the surface of our public life. Probably at no time in our history were sermons more numerous; certainly never were they so ineffective. It might be plausibly maintained that the preacher has waned with the religion of which he is the accredited exponent, but I think this is not the true explanation. Popular interest in theology has dwindled, but not popular interest in religion. The immense sale of religious romances cannot be explained on the supposition that religion has ceased to be interesting. The same disposition of mind which moved a former generation to buy Tillotson's sermons now makes it worth a publisher's while to print a first edition of 100,000

copies of a semi-religious romance. The sermon, in fact, has ceased to be the popular instrument for religious discussion; and the spiritual popes of the hour are not fashionable preachers, but sentimental and speculative novelists.

Let me premise that I do not propose to speak of mission sermons. The conditions under which the mission preacher discourses are altogether extraordinary; he cannot be reasonably supposed to be subject to the rules and considerations which ought to control the normal exercise of the preacher's gift. I desire that you will understand that nothing in my paper is intended to have reference to mission sermons. I confine myself to ordinary preaching, and shall consider the sermon under its two aspects—didactic and pastoral. Incidentally, I shall make some observations on the composition and delivery of sermons.

I. Fuller quaintly describes a notable Puritan preacher of Elizabeth's reign as one who "brought the schools into the pulpit, and, unshelling their controversies out of their hard school terms, made thereof plain and wholesome meat for his people." These words express not inaptly an essential part of the preacher's duty in every age, and most of all in an age of religious transition such as the present. I need not remind this audience that during the last thirty years a change, of which it is scarcely possible to overstate the gravity and magnitude, has passed over the Church. Biblical criticism has come in on us as a flood, and perhaps we were in a special degree unprepared to meet it, because of the excessive dependence on the text of Scripture in which we had been trained. Christianity had been very generally bound up with a certain view and treatment of the Scriptures, and when these were disproved and disallowed everything seemed to be lost. It is, I think, too plain to be denied by any that the first result of biblical criticism has been a large unsettlement of faith, and in some quarters the appearance of what may be called a temper of theological despair. This situation may easily develop in a very disastrous way, either towards a fanatical orthodoxy, which, by resolutely closing its ears to novel and disturbing truth, ensures in the future a rough and ruinous awakening, or towards a prompt and precipitate abandonment of Christianity, which, since for the

moment it has become doubtful, is hastily concluded to be probably false. This situation appears to me to constitute the opportunity and the trial of the Christian teacher. If we follow the line of least resistance and echo the formulæ of traditional belief, so long as they are generally popular, we shall purchase immediate peace and, perhaps, even applause, by the ultimate forfeiture of our legitimate authority. I submit that it is our high and solemn duty to stand before our congregations at this juncture as mediators and interpreters, fulfilling with respect to the new truth of our time the function which our Master sketched in His description of the "scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven," as "a householder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Sermons, composed in obedience to this conception of the preacher's task, and directed deliberately towards the problems which are actually exercising the minds and troubling the consciences of our people, will have that aspect of relevance and that ring of honesty which are but too generally absent from discourses not in other respects undeserving of audience. It is not the least service rendered to the Church by my dear friend and honoured colleague, Canon Gore, that he has set an example in the pulpit of Westminster Abbey of such cogent and courageous preaching. The immense congregations which in season and out of season gather to his sermons prove, if proof be needed, that he has not, in this respect, misunderstood the necessities of the time.

It may, however, be said, and with evident justice, that this didactic task assumes a knowledge and ability of which many clergymen are destitute; that the discussion of critical problems by ill-equipped and inefficient preachers could not assist truth and might easily minister to error; that the arduous parochial work to which many parish priests are necessarily committed, hardly allows them to pursue any regular and systematic study.

I must say plainly that I think very many of the clergy preach too much, and some ought not to preach at all. The issue of a separate preacher's licence to the clergyman seems to suggest that in theory the Church distinguishes between the priest and the preacher. In practice all priests are

licensed to preach. Except for the faint suggestion of discipline which it conveys, and which we cannot afford to lose, the preacher's licence is a futile form. It is much to be wished that reality were restored to this part of our ecclesiastical system, and that grossly ignorant and incompetent clergymen were restrained from preaching and required to read suitable sermons set forth by authority.

In this connection, I would say something on the ancient controversy as to the mode of preaching. Ought men to read their sermons or to preach extempore? I think it is a grave blunder to discuss these methods as mere alternatives. To read your sermons compels you to prepare them, and thus chains you to a certain measure, it may be a very modest measure, of intellectual effort; to preach extempore is always in some degree to preach without preparation. As the fatal facility of continuous utterance develops, the temptation to intellectual indolence grows apace, and, in the sequel, preachers who at one time deserved the popularity they gained, sink into the veriest ranters. Archbishop Whately discouraged, though he did not condemn, extempore preaching. "At all events," he said, "if a man does preach extempore, he should have a store of written sermons in his possession laid up against the time when his powers may fail. I once heard an old clergyman preach extempore, who, I was told, had been in his day a man of considerable talent and eloquence. The sermon I heard from him was absolute twaddle." In describing some extempore preachers, he said, "You might quote Bottom's answer to Snug the joiner in 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' when Snug asks him if the lion's part in the play is written. 'You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring!'"[1]

Bishop Wilberforce advised his clergy to write at least one sermon every week, and himself preached written sermons for fifteen years after his ordination; and so anxious was he to discourage the practice of extempore preaching, that on one occasion when himself preaching without notes, he had a MS. upside down before him "for the benefit of the younger clergy."[2]

I know that it is maintained that written sermons are

[1] *Life and Remains*, p. 401. [2] *Life*, vol. iii. pp. 96, 97.

commonly so ill read as to be ineffective, whereas extempore preaching better arrests and holds attention. It may be so, though I confess that, for my part, the defects of both modes of preaching seem to be roughly equal. If the read sermon is monotonous, the extempore discourse is as often noisy; if the one is sometimes inaudible, the other is occasionally offensive. Burnet's counsel is sound, though he inclines too much to extempore preaching: "The great rule which the masters of rhetoric press much can never be enough remembered, that to make a man speak well and pronounce with a right emphasis, he ought thoroughly to understand all that he says, be fully persuaded of it, and bring himself to have those affections which he desires to infuse into others. . . . And, therefore, such as read their sermons ought to practise reading much in private and read aloud, that so their own ear and sense may guide them to know where to raise or quicken, soften or sweeten their voice, and when to give an articulation of authority or of conviction; where to pause and where to languish. . . . Those who read ought certainly to be at a little more pains than for the most part they are to read true, to pronounce with an emphasis, and to raise their heads and to direct their eyes to their hearers; and if they practised more alone the just way of reading, they might deliver their sermons with much more advantage."[1]

Even more important than the delivery is the composition of sermons. Dr. Johnson "observes that the established clergy in general did not preach plain enough, and that polished periods and glittering sentences flew over the heads of the common people without any impression upon their hearts."[2]

Dean Swift, in his incomparable "Letter to a Young Gentleman lately entered into Holy Orders," dwells on the "frequent use of obscure terms, which by the women are called hard words, and by the better sort of vulgar fine language, than which I do not know a more universal, inexcusable, and unnecessary mistake among the clergy of all distinctions, but especially the younger practitioners." His remedy, perhaps, is even yet worth considering: "I believe

[1] *Pastoral Care*, chap. ix.

[2] *Works*, ii. 268, ed. Birrell.

the method observed by the famous Lord Falkland in some of his writings would not be an ill one for young divines. I was assured by an old person of quality who knew him well, that when he doubted whether a word were perfectly intelligible or no, he used to consult one of his Lady's chambermaids (not the waiting-woman, because it was possible she might be conversant in romances), and by her judgment was guided whether to receive or reject it. And if that great person thought such a caution necessary in treatises offered to the learned world, it will be sure at least as proper in sermons, where the meanest hearer is supposed to be concerned, and where very often a lady's chambermaid may be allowed to equal half the congregation, both as to quality and understanding."[1]

Burnet's rule, that "a preacher is to fancy himself as in the room of the most unlearned man in his whole parish," is rather an assertion of principle than a counsel of practice. More serviceable is his advice that "there should be but one point in a sermon, so that one head, and only one, is well stated and fully set out."

I have always thought that simplicity in form and arrangement is much more helpful to the poor than studied simplicity of phrase. In striving to be intelligible, the preacher sometimes sinks into colloquialisms and vulgarities which dismay and alienate more persons than they enlighten. A simple, lucid style ought to be within the reach of every educated man who can think clearly. Most commonly the root of confused and stilted composition is muddled thinking. And here again the practice of writing sermons is advantageous. Nothing discovers mental confusion so quickly as the necessity of setting down one's thoughts on paper.

II. Hitherto I have spoken mainly of the didactic aspect of the sermon; let me now turn to the pastoral. The sermon has in the case of the English clergyman to serve the purpose which in former times and in other Churches is served by the Confessional. The parish priest stands in his pulpit as *Ductor dubitantium;* he has to solve cases of conscience publicly in his sermon. Always for the most part of his people, often for all of them, the

[1] *Works*, vol. i. p. 233, Dublin, 1751.

pulpit is his sole sphere of moral guidance, of "direction." The preparation for pastoral preaching is not primarily intellectual, but devotional and practical. By the self-knowledge gained in the solitude and conflict of personal religion, the parish priest discovers the key to unlock other hearts and open out the secrets of other lives; but this self-knowledge must not stand alone. It must be chastened, enlarged, interpreted, corrected by experience gained in the faithful and constant study of his people. I believe the knowledge of life, painfully gathered in the manifold contacts and labours of parochial duty, is worth much more as a basis of moral guidance than the study of casuistic manuals or the much-vaunted wisdom of the Confessional. For in the parish human life is seen under normal conditions and in natural proportions, but in the Confessional it is studied only in its morbid moods and darker aspects. The sermon, then, viewed as the instrument of pastoral duty, is to reflect the knowledge and insight of the parish priest, and to be directed to the actual circumstances of the persons to whom it is addressed. I do not believe that any natural gift of eloquence, or any acquirements of theological science, or any labours of preparation, can compensate for the absence of that personal contact with normal life which is the special, perhaps the only, advantage of the parish preacher. The vital qualities of sympathy and thoroughness can hardly belong in like measure to the lucubrations of the student, the rhapsodies of the recluse, or the artificial eloquence of the rhetorician. But what tact and wisdom and self-restraint are demanded in such pastoral preaching, if it is not to miss its aim altogether and sink into the provocation of personal reference and the insolence of satire!

Can so delicate a ministry be entrusted to the risks of extempore speech? Does not prudence unite with modesty in suggesting that such sermons should be written? Archbishop Leighton, whose name marks an epoch in the history of English preaching, dwells on the "holy guile" which ought to mark the ambassadors of Christ: "A kind of guile they may use, but it must carry their King's impress. It must be a holy guile; and such the ministers of the Gospel not only may, but ought to, study. Fishers of men they

are, and why may they not use certain baits and diversity of them? But as their catching is not destructive, but saving, so must all their baits be. They must quarter dove-like simplicity and serpentine wisdom together, as He commanded them that sent them on this embassy."[1]

In conclusion, I revert to the point at which I started. The sermon is of primary importance as the principal instrument of didactic and pastoral duty. It cannot be despised or neglected without injury to the Church and a lowering of the ideal of the ministry. I will venture to add that, in view of all the circumstances of the hour—the intellectual confusion of our people, the tendency to repudiate religious observances, the strange reluctance of our educated youth to enter the ranks of the clergy, the contempt for the pulpit openly expressed in many quarters—it is high time a worthier spirit of responsibility marked the exercise of the preacher's function in the National Church.

[1] *Works*, vol. v. p. 101, London, 1808.

THE BRITISH SUNDAY

[*July* 1899]

THE "British Sunday" has successfully repulsed a formidable attack; the too ambitious proprietors and editors of certain journals counted too rashly on the decay of the Sabbatarian tradition; the gauntlet was thrown down to the national conscience, and taken up with remarkable alacrity. For the moment the institution has been saved; it will pay nobody for some while to outrage popular sentiment on the subject. It must be allowed that the aforesaid journalists had some reason for expecting better fortune in their enterprise. The "British Sunday" has largely lost its authority in practice; it was no unnatural inference that popular sentiment had also changed. Moreover, two circumstances of an abnormal character could hardly have been foreseen. On the one hand, the "Church Crisis" has certainly galvanised Protestantism into a sudden and, for the moment, vigorous activity. The old watchwords are again in general use, and Sabbath observance is not the least respectable and effective: echoing the shibboleths of a former age, men have supposed themselves to share its convictions; and a considerable display of somewhat archaic fervour is the consequence. On the other hand, the Protestant reaction has in this particular secured the co-operation of the British working man. A cynical observer might question the moral quality of a Sabbatarianism which unites an ardent patronage of the Sunday League with an equally ardent abhorrence of seven-day journalism. Apart from cynicism, it will be easily perceived that other considerations than those of religious principle have induced the action of the "Labour Leaders" with respect to this question. Whatever the motives, the fact is equally extraordinary and potent. The triple alliance of the Anglican Hierarchy, the

Nonconformist Conscience, and "Labour" can dispose of forces which even journalists must respect. In the last resort, as we all know, despotisms rest on the basis of a plebiscite; and it is good for the despots occasionally to have their attention called to the fact. It is, further, to be remembered that the "British Sunday" is a characteristic institution; it is severely insular, or, at least, is popularly so regarded; it is vaguely reverenced as the palladium of British prosperity; it takes rank with the Bible in the general belief; these are, as a witty Frenchman once said, the two English Sacraments; a thousand honoured names have certified their worth, and proclaimed them the Jachin and Boaz of British greatness. Such ideas have recently been immensely strengthened; the patriotic fervour which has stricken with political paralysis a once dominant school of politicians, and created among the thrifty sections of the community a curious lust for naval and military expenditure, and the imperial expansion which such expenditure reflects and enables, has conferred on all distinctive British institutions, customs, and methods a new lustre. They stand outside the common categories of criticism; they claim their peerage; they are British, and that is enough. They meet attack as Sigismund met the imputation on his Latinity—"Ego rex Romanorum sum et super grammaticam."

The advocates of seven-day journalism, then, chose an unfortunate moment for their onslaught on the "British Sunday." They waked against their venture a more extended opposition than that of religious conviction, and a more respectable sentiment than that of Philistinism; they came into contact with the Protestant Reaction and the national pride. The conflict having, for the present, terminated in the decisive repulse of the assailants, the moment is propitious for a brief review of the question at stake. I shall divide my paper into two parts, considering in the one the history, and in the other the practical worth, of the "British Sunday."

I

The earliest records of Christianity that we possess certify the existence of the "Lord's day"; it is certainly traceable

to the times of the Apostles; it is, in view of the complete absence of controversy as to its observance, no extravagant hypothesis that its original institution must be ascribed to the Divine Founder of the Christian Church. In that case the familiar designation which is used in the New Testament and still remains the favourite Christian term, "the Lord's day," receives a natural and sufficient explanation. The heathen name, Sunday, was soon adopted, not without misgivings, for obvious reasons of convenience. Tertullian thinks it necessary to deny that the Christians in their Sunday observances worshipped the Sun. The two names were used indifferently, the Christian term prevailing in the usage of the Church, and the heathen term in that of society, and, after the conversion of Constantine, the State. The sanctity of the day was strenuously asserted, and protected by imperial edicts and ecclesiastical canons. Legal proceedings were forbidden, save only such as were held to be necessary, *e.g.* the summary trial of fraudulent shipmasters and the torture of Isaurian pirates, and charitable, *e.g.* the manumission of slaves. "Neither was it only business of the law," says Bingham, "but all other secular and servile labour and employments, that were superseded on this day, except only such as men were called to by necessity or some great charity—as earing and harvest, which at first were allowed on this day, that men might not be disappointed of their seasons; and the visiting of prisoners by the bishops and judges, which was so far from intrenching upon the sacred rest of this day, that it was a necessary office of mercy and charity, which the laws enjoined them." It is evident that, though the Lord's day had a Christian origin and was indeed directly connected with the cardinal Christian doctrine, yet very early the analogy of the Jewish Sabbath powerfully influenced its character. The permission to work at husbandry on the Lord's day, conceded by Constantine, troubled the Christian conscience, and was soon everywhere restrained. It was comparatively easy, as society was then constituted, to secure abstinence from labour on Sunday; the really difficult task was the suppression of amusement. Church and State united in the attempt, but evidently with very slight success. The example of the Jews was opposed to the theory of the

Church, and, at least in this matter, the general body of Christians was inclined to follow the Jews. The insistence on the joyous character of the weekly festival, which had its justification in doctrinal reasons, ministered directly to the cause of Sunday amusement. Moreover, society was organised for amusement, and in becoming nominally Christian it neither altered its system nor changed its tastes. In vain Bishops passed canons, and orators thundered denunciations. The fascinations of the circus and the theatre were superior to the more sober attractions of Divine service, and even on such solemn occasions as Good Friday and the Easter octave communicants flocked to the horse races. Very largely the Church had to give way. The practice of Christendom in the Middle Ages was extremely indulgent; and all the evidences we possess assure us that on the threshold of the Reformation, Sunday, in common with other Church festivals, was a day of popular amusement. The Reformation renewed the attempt which the primitive Church had made without success. Again the old arguments were advanced, and the old denunciations rehearsed; but both now received a great accession of authority from the ecclesiastical situation of the Reformers. They had very generally broken with the historic Church; they had repudiated with violence the mediæval tradition. At first they needed no better sanction than the intensity of their own repugnance; but on the morrow of revolution followed the necessity of apologetics. Why this immense change, this waste of the beauty and harmony of life, this repulsive individualism? Necessarily the Reformers, precisely in proportion to the violence of their methods and the severity of their logic, fell back on the only authority left them—the inspired and infallible Bible. Violence and logic were supreme at Zurich; from Zurich Calvin drew his inspiration, and cast far and wide the shadow of his tyrannous theology. That accomplished divine, the late Canon Aubrey Moore, has well vindicated for Zwingli the paternity of the British Sunday. "About the legalism of the Swiss School there is no doubt. Thus, while the Augsburg Confession deals very freely with the Christian Sunday, and speaks of it, not as a renewal of the Old Testament Sabbath, but as a convenient arrangement for public worship which

nobody supposes to be *necessary*, English Sabbatarianism comes from Zwingli, through Calvin, who exaggerated the craving of Zwingli after an Old Testament Zwinglianism." Transferred to English soil by the restored Marian exiles, these rigid Biblical views soon became associated with the domestic conflicts of the Reformed Church. The Puritans were Presbyterian in polity and Calvinist in doctrine; their established rivals shared their beliefs but necessarily repudiated their discipline. Moreover, the genius of the Church of England was unfriendly to that attitude of violent reprobation which the foreign Reformers and their English disciples naturally adopted towards the mediæval tradition. All human experience attests the obduracy of social habit; the revolution in doctrine, ritual, and polity which is summed up in the convenient phrase, the English Reformation, could not alter customs which were coeval with the Monarchy and coextensive with the national life. No doubt the gloomy doctrines of Puritanism continually gained adherents; when the chronic conflict of the Church took a political colour, and, under the ill-fated Charles, became a contest between despotism and liberty, Sabbatarianism shared the triumph of its patrons. It reigned during the anarchy and the Protectorate; when Puritanism fell before the resentment of the nation, which it had humiliated and provoked beyond endurance, Sabbatarianism shared its overthrow, but far less effectively than might have been expected. It is not a little remarkable that after the Restoration no attempt was made to renew the official encouragement of Sunday amusements which had given such deep provocation under the first Stuarts. "James I. insisted on manly exercises on the Sunday, among other reasons, 'lest the youth should grow up unfit for warriors.' Charles I. reissued his father's *Book of Sports* 'out of pious care for the service of God,' etc. But Charles II. had hardly been three years upon the throne when a Bill passed both Houses of Parliament 'for the better observance of the Sabbath,' but was mysteriously missing when it should have received the Royal assent. Pepys tells us, on September 14, 1662, that 'the Bishop of London had given a very strict order against boats going on Sundays,' and on September 20, 1663, that a proclamation had been read

against Sunday travelling. In 1690, Queen Mary 'forbade all hackney carriages and horses to work on Sundays, and had constables stationed at the corners of the streets to capture all puddings on their way to bakers' ovens on Sundays'; but this was outrunning public opinion, and an embryo riot caused the law to be immediately suspended."[1]

I think the influence of Puritanism on the nation is underrated by those who represent the Restoration as a great national revulsion. It was this in the spheres of politics and society, but not in the sphere of religion. Presbyterianism had suffered at the hands of the sectaries; the Restoration was its work; and there is little evidence to show that the nation was as weary of its theology as it certainly was impatient of its discipline. The immense circulation of the English Bible provided an independent basis for Sabbatarian views; for it was everywhere read with the conviction of its infallible authority, and interpreted on the theory of its verbal inspiration. No doubt there was a general recession from the extreme Sabbatarianism of the Commonwealth, against which even Owen potested.

"Directions have been given," he writes in his excellent exercitation on the practical observance of the Lord's day, "and that not by a few, for the observation of a day of holy rest, which, either for the matter of them or the manner prescribed, have had no sufficient warrant or foundation in the Scripture. For whereas some have made no distinction between the Sabbath as moral and as Mosaical, unless it be merely in the change of the day, they have endeavoured to introduce the whole practice required on the latter into the Lord's day. . . . Others again have collected whatever they could think of that is good, pious, and useful in the practice of religion, and prescribed it all, in a multitude of instances, as necessary to the sanctification of this day; so that a man can scarcely in six days read over all the duties that are proposed to be observed on the seventh. . . . And, lastly, it cannot be denied but that some, it may be measuring others by themselves and their own abilities, have been apt to tie them up unto such long, tiresome duties, and rigid abstinences from refreshments, as have clogged their minds,

[1] See *Life in the English Church*, 1660–1714, by J. H. Overton, p. 320.

and turned the whole service of the day into a wearisome bodily exercise that profiteth little."[1]

Baxter, whose many infirmities compelled him to take exercise, was still more liberal. He directly advocated Sunday walks, and was disposed to look kindly on Sunday entertainments, though he himself was strict in his observance of the day, and so considerate of the prevailing Sabbatarianism that he took his Sunday constitutional privately lest he "should tempt others to sin." He urged with great good sense that "the body must be kept in that condition (as far as we can) that is fittest for the service of the soul; a heavy body is but a dull and heavy servant to the mind, yea, a great impediment to the soul in duty and a great temptation to many sins."[2]

The Anglican divines naturally went further in the direction of laxity, for they had suffered most at the hands of the advocates of strictness. Sabbatarianism had the hallmark of fanaticism, and symbolised the negation of ecclesiastical authority. The exigences of their situation combined with their natural prejudices to create in their minds a loftier notion of the Church than had been common before the Rebellion. The views of Laud, dissociated from his personality, became the firm convictions of the Caroline clergy. The obligation of Sunday observance was based on ecclesiastical authority rather than on Divine commandment, and the traditional usage of Christendom permitted Sunday amusements. Such representative divines as Thorndike and Jeremy Taylor protested against the Judaic severity of their Puritan oppressors, and many Anglicans did not scruple to recommend Sunday recreations as permissible and wholesome. "Sanderson"—who has recently been quoted with approval by the Bishop of Chester, to the astonishment of many and the distress of some of his clergy—"pleaded for recreations, walking and discoursing" for "men of liberal education," but for the "ruder sort of people," "shooting, leaping, pitching the bar, and stoolball," rather than "dicing and carding." "These pastimes," he said, "were to be used 'in godly and commendable sort,' with great moderation, at

[1] Owen's *Works*, vol. xix. p. 441, Edinburgh, 1862.

[2] *Vid.* Stoughton's *Religion in England*, vol. iv. p. 227.

seasonable times, not during Divine service nor at hours appointed by the master of the house for private devotion, but so as to make men fitter for God's service during the rest of the day; and all this was to be done, not doubtingly, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin; nor uncharitably, for in this, 'as in all indifferent things, a wise and charitable man will, in godly wisdom, deny himself many times the use of that liberty, which in a godly charity he dare not deny to his brother.'"[1]

But the essential principle of Laudian Churchmanship was conformity, so far as was practicable, with the primitive Church, and, as we have seen, the primitive Church was theoretically opposed to Sunday amusement. It followed that the more devout of the Caroline clergy approximated, though from another side and for other reasons, to the Puritan strictness. Especially among the pious laymen, who belonged to the religious societies of the period immediately preceding the spiritual disaster of the Hanoverian succession, this primitive severity found advocates and disciples. Canon Overton attributes to their insistence the vigorous action of the magistrates in putting down Sunday desecration. There can be no doubt that a very high standard of Sunday observance was maintained among devout Anglicans in that golden age of Anglicanism, the interval between the Restoration and the Accession of George I. The schism of the Non-jurors withdrew from the Established Church its most devoted and spiritual members; the deathly languor of the eighteenth century settled upon an enfeebled Church. Sunday observance went the way of all positive religious obligations. It was a faint tradition among English Churchmen, a strong convention among Dissenters; out of both the life had largely disappeared. Then came the Methodist Movement inspired from the sources of primitive Christianity, and its continuation within the Church, inspired from the lower sources of the Reformation, the Evangelical Movement. Both the one and the other involved a quickening of Sabbatarianism. How considerable the influence in the direction of severity has been may be estimated from the fact that the practice of Sunday walking, which seemed innocent and even

[1] *Vid.* Stoughton's *Religion in England*, vol. iv. pp. 228, 229.

advisable to Baxter in the seventeenth century, could only be excused by Maurice, in the middle of the nineteenth, at the cost of much personal anxiety and much public abuse. It cannot be doubted that the horror provoked by the blasphemous proceedings of the French Revolutionaries coincided with the religious tendencies of the Methodist and Evangelical Movements to revive the strict doctrine of Sabbatic obligation, which in the easy tolerance of the eighteenth century had seemed to fall into irrecoverable decay. To this day the abolition of the Christian Sunday by the fanatics of 1792 does duty on the platforms of Sabbatarianism. The British Sunday, as we know it, is thus the creature of revival and reaction, and its golden age was the first half of this century, when both forces were at their strongest.

The Oxford Movement has stood towards the preceding period much in the position of the Caroline Restoration towards Puritanism. In both cases an ecclesiastical reaction has followed upon Protestant domination; in both cases the rigid authority of an infallible Book has been exchanged for the more elastic control of the Church tradition. The Lord's day has been brought down from its solitary dignity as the Christian Sabbath, a Divine and immutable institution, to the general category of ecclesiastical institutions, the fellow in origin and obligation of numerous holidays and festivals. This does not necessarily involve any lowering of the standard of Sunday observance. The importance attached to ecclesiastical institutions will obviously be determined by the theory of the Church which finds acceptance. Where the Church is exalted, a corresponding weight will be accorded to her precepts; where low views of the Church prevail, her institutions will be lightly regarded. If it be urged against me that, as a matter of fact, this is not the case, that in actual experience the highest doctrine of the Church has coexisted with an ostentatious neglect of Sunday observance, I answer that the explanation lies in the natural necessity under which the extreme advocates of ecclesiastical authority in the Church of England are placed. They are the victims on the one hand of an inevitable repugnance, on the other of an equally inevitable attraction. They show their scorn of Puritanism by openly contemning the characteristic

Puritan tradition; they vindicate their Catholic lineage by openly approximating to the lax practice of continental Romanism. Meanwhile general causes have operated for laxity: the yoke of convention has been broken from off the neck of society; men act more freely; they no longer suppress themselves in deference to the custom of society; there has grown up a pride of self-assertion in matters of religious observance which, in vindicating the rights of individuality, has seriously endangered common order, and brought into question the broad agreements on which, in the last resort, human fellowship reposes. Unquestionably Divine institution is a firmer barrier against insurgent rationalism than ecclesiastical enactment; and so far the Oxford Movement, by substituting the latter for the former, has weakened the resisting power of the Sabbatarian tradition; on the other hand, the *Zeitgeist* of modern times is more hostile to soi-disant Divine institution than to the more modest and intelligible authority of ecclesiastical enactment; the latter can be tolerated provided that its sphere be rigidly defined, the former is altogether intolerable. While the theory of Sunday observance has thus been perceptibly lowered, the practice has been notoriously relaxed. The conditions of modern life are not favourable to a rigid application of the Sabbatarian hypothesis. Every census reveals the fact that the population of Great Britain is gathering together at great centres, notably at the greatest, London. It is an impressive and afflicting reflection that within the metropolitan area is now collected twice the population of Elizabethan England. Urban life creates a type of character—emotional, restless, mobile, lawless—the least disposed in the world to the strict observance of the Lord's day. The "British Sunday," then, survives in a dilapidated condition, amid unkindly surroundings; but it survives; the question is, Ought it to be jealously protected and preserved, or ought it rather to be cleared away as an outworn fashion, nay, an antique imposture cumbering the ground?

II

In considering the practical question, I apprehend that it is of the first importance to keep distinct the religious

and the social aspects of Sunday observance. The first is the domestic business of the Christian Church; the last alone is the matter for the general public. It is true that many circumstances have united to obscure the distinction. It is the essence of Establishment that the proper disciplines of the Church should be, so to say, borrowed by the State, and enforced on the community; and, unquestionably, when the Church is popular, there is considerable advantage in borrowing also the reasons and sanctions of those disciplines; but at bottom such borrowing is equally unreasonable in itself and pernicious in tendency; it tends to obscure the true character of State action, and to provoke resentments which are strictly irrelevant against Christian obligations. The strength of the argument for laxity largely arises from the natural disgust induced by the attempt, or what looks like the attempt, to extend the authority of Christian duty beyond the limits of the Christian profession, to hold men, who do not accept the Christian premisses, to the Christian conclusions, and thus, in a very real sense, to oppress consciences. When non-Christians are a small proportion of the community, these hardships are condoned as the inevitable incidents of opposition to the prevailing sentiment; but when the contrary is the case, and the advocates of rigidity are themselves but a fraction of the people, then the attempt to maintain the general observance of their system has an appearance of intolerable insolence. Society seems to lend itself to an evident hypocrisy against which self-respecting men are tempted to protest. It can hardly be denied that something like this is the present situation. The religious obligation of Sunday in the Puritan sense is no longer the belief of the majority of Englishmen; probably the Nonconformists alone, and by no means all of them, are conscientious and thoroughgoing advocates of the "British Sunday." Most English Churchmen, I apprehend, hold the ecclesiastical theory of Sunday obligation; there is much division of opinion as to the actual requirements of that theory in practice, some holding the sterner view of the early Fathers, some inclining to the laxer view of the Middle Ages, and some ostentatiously emulating in this respect, and not in this only, the large liberty of modern Rome; all, however,

are agreed that what the Church has instituted the Church can regulate, and therefore that the question of Sunday observance can, and ought to be, discussed by Churchmen with liberty, and decided by Church authority with reference to the actual requirements of modern life. Few Churchmen would seriously claim any right to impose the domestic decisions of the Christian Society on a nation which largely repudiates membership in that Society. The assumption of Tudor statesmanship, that Church and nation are conterminous units, is now admittedly a fiction; but it still penetrates our State system, and survives in our Statute Book. Thus in this matter of Sunday observance, the ægis of the law is still extended over the custom of the Church; the nation is deprived of its liberty in certain directions in deference to Christian convictions; individuals are coerced in the service of a Creed they do not believe. A mass of legislation enforces the observance of Sunday in the spheres of law, commerce, and recreation; and so far is that legislation from being obsolete, that powerful political combinations are now working for extending it in certain directions. A total prohibition of the liquor trade on Sunday is one of the most popular of political projects, and it involves, as I need hardly point out, an immense restriction of the opportunities of public amusement. Can this be justified on those equitable assumptions which are now supposed to be universally accepted? I answer that the justification, if it exist at all, depends on the rigorous separation of the social from the religious aspects of Sunday observance. I would banish from the discussion as strictly irrelevant every religious consideration, and consider the subject solely on the ground of the well-being of society; on that ground, I think, the case for conservatism in the matter of our treatment of Sunday is a very strong one. I cannot doubt that the jealous protection of the weekly holiday is the true policy of the working classes, in the widest sense of the term. The strain of competition is not friendly to so large a sacrifice of working time; the cupidity of many workmen will always enable employers to find in the ranks of their victims the allies and agents of their own disastrous avarice; the bigotry of the Dissenter and the more languid intolerance of the

Anglican are in this matter ministerial to the material interests of the working classes. But scarcely less necessary is the preservation of Sunday from frankly falling into the category of popular holidays. Fifty-two "Bank Holidays" in the year would be destructive of all the best possibilities of Sunday, and almost infinitely mischievous. The weekly holiday must be preserved under lock and key until the working classes have learned how to use it. Few more repulsive spectacles can be seen than the return of Sunday League excursions from Southend and Clacton, and such places of resort; it is evident at once that, so treated, the Sunday not only fails of its best service to the nation, but also threatens to become an influence of degradation. I do not here dwell on the large infringement of the holiday involved in the organisation of such expeditions. Railway servants, omnibus conductors, cab drivers, restaurant keepers, publicans, etc., are set to Sunday work in the interest of the Sunday League. That is an element in the question which must be noted, watched, and weighed. My main contention, however, is that the social worth of Sunday is largely contingent on its exemption from the vulgar and exhausting enjoyments of ordinary holidays. The conditions under which modern industry is carried on are at once extremely unfavourable to the development of individuality, and directly conducive to that lawless, frivolous disposition which is intolerant of all moral and mental discipline. Sunday should operate as the counterpoise and correction of those conditions; and to some extent, as matters now stand, it does so operate. The law, and still more the strong convention of society, stamps on the day a character of quietude and solemnity which, in numberless instances, prohibits the noisier and more exciting diversions, and induces a disposition to seek the ministrations of religion which, in infinite variety, are provided by the zeal of the Churches. I speak strictly on the basis of the social worth of Sunday when I refer to those ministrations. Whatever may be thought of the Creed of Christendom, few thoughtful observers of human life will question the stimulating moral, and even mental, influence of the Christian system. The religiously disposed artisan is perceptibly a higher type of artisan than the man who stands

outside all religious interests. No one can watch the faces of the men who regularly listen to the open-air orators in the London Parks and not be impressed by the gravity of their attention, and the occasional intelligence of their comments. Even that form of Sunday observance is, I apprehend, superior in its influence on individuals to the vulgar and brutalising delight of a Sunday excursion. But much can be done in the direction of improving the moral and intellectual provision of Sunday. The State must steer a middle course between yielding to the excessive demands of religious people on the one hand, and facilitating the heedless secularism of irreligious people on the other. Every proposal relating to Sunday should thus be determined strictly on its merits as bearing on the social life of the community. It is not only religion that insists on man's need of regular exemption at suitable intervals from the bondage of his normal tasks. Experience confirms the suggestion of reason, that only with such assistance will the balance of his nature be maintained, the brutalising effect of routine mitigated, and the social sympathies given opportunity of cultivation and exercise. The Churches make no mean contribution to the welfare of society by jealously guarding, as a sacred heritage, the Lord's day. The impression of a careful and devout observance of Sunday within the Christian pale cannot but influence the general attitude of the nation, and therefore I deeply regret the lax views of Sunday observance which are now frequently expressed in Christian circles. Such laxity seems to me not only indefensible on religious grounds,—for whatever theory be held as to the origin and obligation of the Sunday, it is manifest that for Christian men the day is holy and allocated by sacred authority to religious duty,—but deplorable on social grounds also, as tending to withdraw from the support of those higher social services which Sunday can render, the influence which the nation is entitled to count upon from the Christian Church. Nor can I conceal from myself the mischievous effect of Sunday laxity on the life of the Church. Unless the experience of Christendom be at fault, the Christian life needs the discipline of religious observances. Devotion languishes apart from public worship; and the principal instrument of religious teaching is the pulpit; but

now public worship is deserted and the pulpit is a byword. The clergy but too faithfully correspond in their mental qualifications to the modest requirements of their position. The laity complain, but absurdly. They are themselves the authors of the mischief. It would seem that the Church has reached the point of either vigorously reasserting its domestic discipline or compromising irrecoverably its character as a Divine institution. There are, I think, signs that this is recognised in some quarters; there is a suggestive impatience of the authority of general opinion as such, a desire to find again, under the difficult conditions of modern life, a Christian Society of the primitive type, with laws of its own making and an active executive. This revival of ecclesiastical self-consciousness has many expressions, some of them rather alarming. I await with anxiety to see whether it will arrest the decline of the British Sunday, and I hope it will.

BISHOP FRENCH OF LAHORE

[1896]

No problem can be more interesting, and surely none can be accounted more important, than the problem of the religious future of the world. In the discussion of that problem, the history and prospects of Christian Missions must have a primary place. So much is due to the admitted superiority of the Christian religion over all its rivals, to the vast scale of its proselytising efforts, to the great history of its Missions, to the high character of many of its missionaries. At present Christian Missions are passing through a process of transition. Probably at no previous period has there been more genuine zeal for the world's conversion, nor, in spite of much suspicion in some quarters not wholly unjustified by facts, a higher type of missionary; but in the face of new difficulties some potent evangelistic agencies are no longer available.

The conditions under which the Missions of Christianity are carried on have changed. The development of religious thought at home has inevitably tended to reflect itself abroad; and though it is probably true that obsolete theories and methods will linger longest in the missionary field, where the friction of spiritual conflict blunts the charities of discipleship, and the arduous circumstances of proselytising do not favour reflection or learning, yet it is certain that in the long run no part of the Church can remain outside the influence of prevailing ideas. Especially in two directions modern thought has profoundly affected missionary methods. On the one hand, the estimate of the spiritual state of the non-Christian world has been profoundly changed; on the other hand, the real worth of the non-Christian religions is much more justly appreciated. In former times the Christian missionary was moved to his work by the profound pity he felt for the

myriads of the heathen falling into endless perdition for lack of the saving knowledge of the Gospel. The vision of horror haunted his imagination and acted as a spur to his will. The worships of the heathen were so many devices of the prince of darkness for maintaining his hold upon his victims. The nearer they seemed to approach Christian doctrines and practices, the more evident was their diabolic origin; for had not the apostle warned the Church that Satan disguised himself as an angel of light? These were, unquestionably, the inspiring principles of the mediæval Missions, and they rendered very plausible, to the best and greatest of the mediæval missionaries, that policy of coercion which secular potentates for reasons of their own were ever ready to propose and assist.

These sentiments are not wholly extinct even in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Quite recently a vigorous protest against the intolerant bigotry of Christian missionaries has issued from the press, expressing the deliberate judgment of a singularly acute and well-informed observer, and meriting the careful consideration of all the friends and supporters of Christian Missions.[1] It is, however, sufficiently certain that a worthier spirit is permeating the missionary world, and powerfully affecting the best and most successful of the missionaries. The *brutal* theory of the Middle Ages could not survive the widening horizon of modern thought and a more adequate knowledge of non-Christian religions. The modern evangelist cannot regard the adherents of the great Asiatic faiths with the dreadful pity which filled the mind of S. Boniface or S. Columba, and inspired their vast and fruitful labours. That potent missionary motive is no longer available.

It might seem, indeed, that the permanence of Christian Missions is imperilled; and it can hardly be denied that there exists a considerable body of opinion, mainly outside the Christian denominations, but by no means wholly so, which is markedly contemptuous of existing Missions and sceptical of their future. In so far as this opinion represents the absence of Christian conviction, it is not surprising and it is not significant; but in so far as it represents the mind

[1] *Evangelisation of the non-Christian World*, by R. N. Cust, LL.D., London, 1894.

of Christian people, it is both surprising and significant. It is surprising because loss of faith in Christian Missions logically involves loss of faith in Christianity itself; it is, indeed, historically absurd, since all Christians, and none more conspicuously than Europeans, who might seem less likely subjects for the influence of an Oriental faith than the mass of existing non-Christians, are living evidences of the missionary success of the Christian religion. It is significant, we believe, in spite of its unreasonableness, because it reveals a deep and general dissatisfaction with the conduct and results of modern Missions.

The stout volumes[1] which record the life of Thomas Valpy French, Bishop of Lahore, provide, perhaps, the most effectual defence of Christian Missions and the most searching criticism of missionary methods. Mr. Birks has evidently found his task a labour of love. He is a genuine admirer of his subject, and he counts boldly on the equal admiration of his readers. At first we were disposed to resent the copious extracts from correspondence, which did not seem always to deal with very important matters, or throw much light on the Bishop's character; and we still think that better justice would have been done to the subject if the ample materials which the author had at his disposal had been more sparingly used, and, perhaps, more effectively arranged. Beyond this general criticism, we have nothing adverse to say. Mr. Birks was bold, but not too bold, in counting on the enthusiasm of his readers. It is much to say of a modern biography that it left us, at the conclusion of two bulky volumes, really impressed by the subject, and really grateful to the writer. We cannot readily recall a record of which the interest is so sustained, the moral dignity so great, and the pathos so deep. We share Mr. Birks's enthusiasm and pardon his diffuseness. The personal charm of this life is very great; but in our judgment its importance is even greater. Alike in what he did, and what he failed to do, French was a pioneer. We believe that the volumes before us will take a position of recognised and permanent value in the literature of Christian Missions.

[1] *Life and Correspondence of Thomas Valpy French, first Bishop of Lahore*, by the Rev. Herbert Birks, M.A., London, 1895.

Thomas Valpy French was born on New Year's Day 1825. He died at Muscat, in Arabia, on May 14, 1891. Of the sixty-six years of his life, more than forty were devoted to missionary work, mostly in India. During that long period he toiled almost unceasingly amid circumstances, always arduous, not rarely of extraordinary difficulty. The intervals of nominal rest in England were scarcely less full of work than the years abroad. He was a man who must have distinguished himself in any sphere of life. Possessed of every advantage of birth, ability, physical vigour, strong and lofty character, he might have held a place of great prominence among his contemporaries in less toilsome and, so far as secular estimates reckon, more important walks of life; but almost from his cradle the evangelist's ideal arrested and inspired him. The strong religious surroundings of his early years strengthened and coloured his missionary aspirations. He gained from Arnold at Rugby a moral strenuousness which proved a wholesome tonic to the sentimentality of inherited evangelicalism. Oxford, then throbbing with the ardours and ambitions of the Tractarian Movement, inspired him with that affection for primitive theology and keen interest in Christian history which left so deep a mark on his subsequent life, and exercised so potent an influence on the development of his thought. His career at Oxford was distinguished. A First Class in the Final Classical School, in days when First Classes were rare and final schools few, was followed by the Chancellor's Prize for a Latin essay and a Fellowship at University College. It was not unlikely that French would settle down to a career in the University; but the death of a College friend in a railway accident, coupled with the direct appeal of Fox, the Rugby Missionary, determined him to renounce Oxford for India. Fox's death followed speedily on his solemn appeal to French, and "added to its force by making it come to him like a voice from the dead." On April 16, 1850, he was formally "accepted" by the Church Missionary Society, and charged with the foundation of a College at Agra.

The foundation of this College was designed as an attempt to evangelise the higher classes of the native population. The normal method of preaching in the bazaars was found by

experience to be of little use for any but the general multitude. A real desire for Western knowledge existed among the wealthy and influential Hindoos; and it was thought that, by offering the advantages of a sound education in secular subjects, an opportunity might be found for inculcating the moral and religious teachings of Christianity. Before all things a thorough grasp of the vernacular languages was necessary; and French set to work at this difficult task with indomitable courage and industry. The obstacles in the way of evangelisation which arise from ignorance, or merely partial knowledge of the native languages, must be very formidable. French undoubtedly possessed an unusual ability in mastering strange tongues, and his reputation as a linguist is deservedly high. "He was known in his later days as the 'haft-zaban Padri,' or seven-tongued clergyman of Lahore." This facility was the result of protracted and unremitting labour; his disgust at finding himself quite powerless to address the natives acted as a constant spur to his industry. The task would have daunted most men, at least as it was presented to French by Mr. Jukes, whom he had consulted.

"You must, of course," he said, "commence with Urdu or Hindustani, so as to be able to talk with your servants, to help in the services of the Church and in the schools. You had better give some six or eight hours a day to that, and also spend two or three hours at Punjabi, to be able to talk with villagers. You should also try and give two or three hours to the study of Persian, which you will find invaluable in the schools, and all your spare time to Arabic, so as to be able to read the Quran."

It is very evident that French prided himself on his linguistic achievements; he applied himself to the study of languages up to the very end of his life; and his last missionary enterprise was not unconnected with his anxiety to perfect his knowledge of Arabic. Yet it is sufficiently evident that he did not always succeed in making himself intelligible, even when using a language in which he considered himself to have acquired facility of expression. In Persia he relates with pious exultation his enjoyment of "the strangely unlooked-for privilege to be allowed in these Persian villages,

so hopelessly out of my beat before, to be heard and understood even by some of the poor, as well as by the educated." His zeal obstructed his perception of the true state of affairs and an editorial note is suggestive—

"Yet by the poor the Bishop was not *always* understood. Dr. Bruce relates how one day he heard him trying to explain to his gholam, or servant, the Indian custom of taking on one of the horses in the middle of the night to a stage halfway in advance upon the next day's march. French addressed him in words which may be roughly paraphrased as follows—"Gholam! conduct my steed into the way of truth at—at midnight, and I will make my exodus (departure out of life) to-morrow morning." The poor man gazed at him in blank amaze till Dr. Bruce explained."

The difficulty in French's case arose from his scholarly preference for classical terms, which were largely unintelligible to the common people. This preference led to the practical failure of the revised Hindustani Prayer-Book. The strength and weakness of his character are very apparent in the history of this abortive revision—

"The greatest disappointment of his later years," says his successor, Bishop Matthew, "was the unfavourable reception given to the Revised Urdu Prayer-Book by the missionaries of the North-West Provinces and the Punjab. When, some time after his resignation, I begged him to revisit his old diocese, he replied that the treatment his book had met with in the Native Church made it impossible for him to do so. Though I am no expert, I am afraid there can be little doubt that in this matter the public opinion of the Church was right and the Bishop mistaken. Certainly it was a matter of the deepest regret to many that they could not regard the book as suited for general use. The Bishop had been assisted by a competent Committee; but with his high ideas of episcopal authority, and very pronounced opinions as to style, the Committee were assessors only, and their judgment again and again overruled by the Bishop. His predilection for Arabic religious terms led to the introduction of a great number of words quite unintelligible to the simple people who form the staple of our congregations. There were also some important departures from the English original, the

Bishop deeming himself at liberty to go behind it to the Latin sources of the Prayer-Book. At the same time the book was a monument of scholarly and erudite labour, which will not be thrown away, but will leave its mark on any version which may secure the acceptance of the Church."

His own devotion to the study of Oriental languages was an evidence of his clear perception of the true lines of missionary effort. He insisted, in season and out of season, on the folly of endeavouring to force the Christianity of India into the grooves of Western theology. He laboured to create a native ministry, sufficiently learned and numerous to take over the heavy responsibility of adapting historic Christianity to the conditions of Indian existence. He felt convinced—and the conviction gathered strength with his enlarged knowledge of missionary problems—that the conversion of the Indian peoples could never be the work of foreigners. Native apostles must arise, corresponding to the native conceptions of religious teachers, commending the Gospel by their ascetic contempt of secular pleasures and interests, and visibly embodying in their own lives the faith and the sacrifice they proclaim. He was ever on the watch for such recruits. In the casual crowds that gathered about him on his evangelistic journeys, in the inquirers who were sufficiently interested in his preaching to come to him for more information, above all in the students in the Colleges over which he presided, he sought for the apostles of India. His distrust of foreign agents was justified by the testimony of primitive missionaries, and his observance of the actual methods adopted by the Hindu sect leaders.

"The very last thing which has been practised amongst us as missionaries was what the greatest stress was laid and effort expended upon by Hindu sect leaders, and by the early British and Anglo-Saxon missionaries, as well as by Mohammedan moollahs everywhere; I mean, giving a few instruments the finest polish possible; imbuing a few select disciples with all that we ourselves have been taught of truth, and trying to train and build them up to the highest reach of knowledge attainable to us. It is but seldom that this has been the relation of the missionary to the catechist, of the schoolmaster to the student; what the Soofee calls "iktibas"

—lighting the scholar's lamp at the master's light. The perpetuation of truth (must we not add of error also?) has in every age depended on this efficacious method of handing down teaching undiluted and unmutilated."

French undoubtedly appreciated justly the witness of historic Christianity, and, we may add, the lesson of the Gospel. The Founder of Christianity Himself adopted this method of diffusing truth and creating a religious society. The actual circumstances of modern missionary work, however, gravely complicate the question of method. The racial affinities of Christianity enhance its secular importance. Originally an Asiatic faith, and for many generations mainly Oriental, it has in the course of centuries become predominantly European; and, as it presents itself to-day to the non-Christian peoples, it is regarded universally as part of that European civilisation with which, in so many and various ways, they come into contact. This circumstance is hardly an advantage. If the material prosperity of the West—its science, its literature, its political force—commend its religion to the less civilised adherents of other faiths, it must be allowed that the commercial, political, social, racial antipathies, which sever the Western nations from the rest of the human race, raise many obstacles, not really involved in Christianity, to the world's conversion. The resistance of the natives of India or China to the message of the Christian missionary is not merely, perhaps not mainly, provoked by the actual contents of that message, so much as by its apparent association with formidable dangers to national independence, or immemorial social custom. It is notorious that this supposition is frequently well founded. Many Christian Missions are confessedly carried on in the name and for the interest of national aggrandisement. The Roman Catholic Missions are notoriously French in design and tendency; the Republic appreciates to the full their political value, and, in consideration of it, is willing at all times to lay aside its inveterate suspicion of the Roman Church, and to impose by main force in Asia and Africa that ecclesiastical domination which it so eagerly resents in France itself. It would be difficult to deny that the same accusation may plausibly be brought against the Missions undertaken by the English; but, partly

owing to the circumstance that most of those Missions are carried on within the dominions of the British Crown, partly to their voluntary and sectarian character, the political tendency of English Missions is much less prominent. French was very sensible of the evils arising from the political and racial associations of Christianity.

"It seems clear," he wrote, "that antipathy to the English lies at the door of much opposition to the Gospel. If we could get an exclusively Native Church, emancipated from British control, with all orders of ministry complete, there would be much more hope."

It might have been thought that, with these views, French would have cordially approved the neutral attitude on all religious questions observed by the Government of India; but this was far from the case. As Bishop of Lahore, he counted as a senior chaplain on the Indian Establishment, and his exacting sense of duty interpreted severely his official responsibilities. He resented any neglect of religious observance on the part of prominent personages, as not only a breach of discipline, but also as involving an unfair treatment of the Christian missionaries. He remonstrated fearlessly with commanding officers when their conduct seemed to him calculated to bring discredit on religion. He particularly resisted the tendency to secularise Sunday. On one occasion he succeeded in persuading General Roberts to defer a Sunday march; and in 1882 he obtained from the Commander-in-Chief a General Order directing "that no movement of troops shall take place on a Sunday, except when absolutely required." Generally he was well supported by the military authorities; indeed, it is impossible to read these volumes without genuine pride in the high moral tone which they reveal in the leading Indian officials.

Anglo-Indian society makes a creditable appearance in these pages. French describes the life of Calcutta in appreciative terms, and his personal relations with his fellow-countrymen appear to have been friendly. He regarded the Government as Christian, and he resented the idea of neutrality. Probably he hardly realised the pressure upon consciences involved in his theory: the adoration of authority is indigenous in the East, and the mere fact that

Christianity is the religion of the governing race dangerously commends it to the acceptance of the more unworthy sections of the native population. He was very uneasy at the educational policy of the Government, and urged the necessity of definite moral teaching in the primary schools; but, in spite of the sympathy of Lord Ripon and the emphatic approval of many distinguished persons, both European and Native, "Agnosticism" and its "negative influences" were too strong to allow of success. Sir William Hunter has recently expressed in striking language the fears with which experienced observers regard the elaborate educational system which the Indian Government has established. Bishop French might stand for "the Old Missionary," so faithfully does the latter express his views. The passage is so intrinsically interesting that we quote it at length—

"Your State education is producing a revolt against three principles which, although they were pushed too far in ancient India, represent the deepest wants of human nature—the principle of discipline, the principle of religion, the principle of contentment. The old indigenous schools carried punishment to the verge of torture. Your Government schools pride themselves in having almost done away with the rod, and in due time you will have on your hands a race of young men who have grown up without discipline. The indigenous schools made the native religions too much the staple of instruction; opening the day's work by chanting a long invocation to the Sun or some other deity, while each boy began his exercise by writing the name of a divinity at the top. Your Government schools take credit for abstaining from religious teaching of any sort, and in due time you will have on your hands a race of young men who have grown up in the public non-recognition of a God. The indigenous schools educated the working and trading classes for the natural business of their lives. Your Government schools spur on every clever small boy with scholarships and money allowances, to try to get into a bigger school, and so through many bigger schools, with the stimulus of bigger scholarships, to a University degree. In due time you will have on your hands an overgrown clerkly generation, whom you have trained in their youth to depend on Government allowances

and to look to Government service, but whose adult ambitions not all the offices of the Government would satisfy. What are you to do with this great clever class, forced up under a foreign system, without discipline, without contentment, and without a God?"[1]

The question suggests itself, How far the persistent attempts to educate Orientals according to Western ideas of education are, in themselves, reasonable? From the missionary standpoint there are special reasons for returning an unfavourable answer.

"Europeans in this nineteenth century," observes Dr. Cust with much plausibility, "place too high a value in the scale of salvation of souls on Education, Civilisation, and even Cleanliness; they are excellent things in themselves, but they are only incidents in the Christian life, and often deadly antagonists to the onward course."[2]

With this attitude French would have had little sympathy. He was a genuine enthusiast in the matter of education; but he realised, as few other men have, the claims of Oriental idiosyncrasies to colour and mould the education which the East must receive from the West. This broad and reasonable view is very apparent in his scheme for the Training College for Native Ministers, which he drew up in 1866, and happily reduced to practice a few years later. It would be difficult to find more statesmanlike utterances than the following; or, we must add, utterances which convey more severe censure on the missionary methods which have generally prevailed in modern times. After laying down the proposition that the Native Church must not be trammelled by "too rigid adherence to our institutions," but that "experience testifies to the existence of some leading features common to the spread and development of all infant Churches," which being preserved, the largest liberty in other respects might be wisely permitted, he briefly reviews the history of Christian Missions, and finds that the discovery and training of suitable native evangelists was ever the principal and most fruitful method of extending the Faith. Then, passing to his actual project, he thus sketches the character which a training college should possess—

[1] *The Old Missionary*, p. 84. [2] *Missionary Methods*, p. 96.

"The College I propose should be dedicated to the purely Native Church—to its building up, its strengthening, and encouragement. A Mohammedan convert, brought up all his life in distaste and prejudice of English, should here find his want of English does not disentitle or incapacitate him for perfecting his curriculum of theology up to the full measure of perfection which the College course reaches. Here Christianity should be domesticated on the Indian soil, and be able to reckon on a home and hearth of its own. Here, when it is possible to obtain them, should be found men who, by a severe and close attention bestowed on Mohammedan and Hindu literature, can express the delicate shades, the nice distinctions of thought, which some, at least, of our standard works of theology involve. . . . The plan of instructing our Native teachers in English, without putting them in possession of the power to express themselves on Christian doctrine correctly and accurately in the vernacular, is (I believe) quite abhorrent to the general practice of the Church of Christ from the beginning, as well as to right reason itself. To be mighty in the English Scriptures, their exposition and interpretation, is very different (clearly) from the power to expound them freely and with confidence to the vast masses of India, who will have nothing to say to the English language; with confidence, I mean, that they are employing appropriate and expressive words, the very counterpart of the ideas and truths to be communicated."

He pleads for "a sufficient library," in order that the missionaries may be fairly equipped for intellectual conflicts with cultivated Natives, well informed as to the difficulties which agitate Western minds on the subject of Christianity, and wonderfully quick to perceive any defect in the case proposed for their acceptance. He speaks with genuine enthusiasm of the "rich store of wealth embraced in the range of Hindu literature."

"No one can study it for any length of time without being struck with the vigour of fancy, the inventiveness and ingenuity of imagination, the exhaustless power of illustration, the abstruseness of reasoning, the subtlety and strength of intellect, which have been laid under contribution for thousands of years to enrich and adorn the language, and

make speech coextensive as far as may be with the boldest processes of mind and thought. Is it more profitable to Christianity, or more analogous with the economy of God's former providential dealings with men, that this store should be thrown away as valueless for the purpose of Gospel extension, of its more forcible expression, of its deeper and firmer engrafting in the national mind, than that we should try to act upon the principle enunciated in so many forms in Holy Scripture: "I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth"? Is the wealth of India's literary treasures less available, less capable of consecration to highest and holiest purposes, than the merchant spoil of Tyre? Is it not hard to suppose that God has suffered that vast mass of erudition and result of mental force to accumulate for so many ages to be utterly purposeless towards setting up the kingdom of His dear Son? . . . Is not the attempt to use it worth making, even though our utmost expectations should not be realised? Have we not been in danger of making the Gospel too much of an exotic? Are there not in Christian theology ample unfoldings of human and Divine thought, which may find as appropriate expression in the niceties, beauties, and forces of the Sanskrit tongue, as in the less abundant copiousness and less precise exactitude of the Greek?"

We make no apology for the length of this quotation. We can find no more suggestive and characteristic utterances in the volumes before us. We submit them as evidence of the hypothesis that Bishop French was not only a missionary, but an ecclesiastical statesman of the highest type.

It is evident that French was disappointed in his expectation that a native apostle would make his appearance in India. Among his converts, indeed, were able and devoted men, whose ministerial labours were by no means fruitless; but none of them possessed the qualities of great spiritual leaders. Failing, then, to find any escape from the necessity of presenting the Gospel through foreigners, French laboured to establish a nobler ideal of missionary life. His own example permanently enriches the history of the Church; it may be said of him that his practice went beyond

his theory. It is evident that the merely professional missionary was abhorrent to him. Writing to his son, he said of Mission work that "it comes of God, when a man is called to it; and if he is not called, he had better break stones on the road or paint door-signs a great deal than take it up." He was, we conclude, disposed to prefer celibate to married missionaries. His great respect for Catholic precedents could hardly permit him to do otherwise. He was himself indeed married, and it is obvious that his affections were ardent and his domestic relationships full of happiness, but he never allowed the claims of the first or the allurements of the last to deflect him from the straightforward pathway of apostolic duty. He deprecated the coming to India of penniless married men. To one such he writes—

"I should, under your circumstances, deprecate your coming, unless you could hold your living (as I did) for one or two years, to see how India suited your health in the fresh trial of it. Many would welcome you heartily, but with a family (I am not sure how large yours is), unless there are private means, so extremely hazardous a risk should scarcely be run, so far as I can see the way in such cases. My wife has means, therefore (though we had not riches) it was not quite like exposing a family to the risk of utter want, or extremely limited and scanty resources."

He moulded his conception of missionary duty on the models of the Catholic past. Of these S. Honoratus of Lerins, the master of Hilary of Arles, is specially mentioned. The founders of English Christianity, notably the great Celtic missionaries, impressed him by their resemblance to the religious teachers of India, and the resemblance clearly commended them to his regard. He chafed against the compromising English connections of Christianity, and was eager to propitiate the legitimate prejudices of the Natives by conforming himself in every possible way to their modes of life. His zeal continually outran all considerations of prudence, and he owed much to his extraordinary strength of constitution. It would be difficult to find parallels in missionary history to his heroic exertions in the Derajat, a wild border-district chiefly inhabited by Afghans, and in Cashmere. Although, much to his disgust, he was compelled

to accept a bodyguard, he succeeded in largely commending himself to the tribesmen.

"He sought to cut himself off from European society, and live amongst the natives as much as possible. He would, if he could, have made himself the member of an Afghan tribe. He grew a beard against his own taste and to conciliate their prejudice, since he found they measured a man as much by his beard as his brains, or nearly so."

His immense physical exertions, aggravated by the climate and the character of the country, were not suffered to interrupt his linguistic studies; the strain of mind and spirit was only less than the strain of body. He seemed possessed with a restless energy which would not suffer him to be inactive, though signs of breakdown accumulated daily. He writes to his friend Stuart—

"I am trying to search out the Porindah Afghans in their tent villages, which are scattered over the country hidden in the jungles, but chiefly near the Indus' banks. It taxes one's nerves and strength heavily, for they are a strange race. I have unfortunately been rather broken in health by a long attack of intermittent fever, which renders me less able to bear the constant exposure this sort of life requires."

We are not surprised to learn that "a day or two after this he was providentially found by Dr. Fairweather stricken senseless in the jungle." The permanent result of these heroic exertions seems to have been slight; but there is evidence that at the time a great impression was made on the Afghans. One tribe actually proposed to make a contract with him to accompany them as religious teacher on their journey to Khorassan, offering apparently to adopt him as a member of the tribe. "He speaks to us," it was remarked, "as a friend of our prophets."

French was attracted to Cashmere by its religious past. Buddhism, which seems to have interested him only less than Mohammedanism, had found one of its greatest missionary centres in the mountain State. The traditions of the enthusiasm which had carried the gospel of Gautama into Thibet, twelve centuries ago, seemed to the ardent missionary prophetic of similar enthusiasm for the spread of a yet nobler Gospel in the future. Missionary operations had been for

some years in progress in Cashmere; but they had led to slight results, partly, perhaps, because of the scandalous conduct of the numerous English who spent their holidays in the country. French wrote strongly of this disgraceful stumbling-block—

"British Christianity never shows itself in more fearfully dark and revolting aspect than in these parts. People seem to come here purposed to covenant themselves to all sensuality, and to leave what force of morality they have behind them in India."

Extraordinary opposition was aroused by the preaching of the missionaries. Sometimes it found sufficiently ridiculous expression. On one occasion a blind woman dispersed the congregation by "rushing about with a stick, laying about all that were present to hear"; on another, the disturbance came from "a drunken, frantic fakir, whom the enemies of truth put forward, who leapt into the air, with demoniacal gestures and distored features, in the wildest, most fiendish manner." Complaints were made to the British Resident, who vainly endeavoured to moderate the ardour of the preachers. On a later visit to Cashmere, French took part in a great religious pilgrimage to the sacred cave of Amarnath. The account of this episode is deeply interesting, but it is too long to quote in full, and too finished to be quoted in part. It was characteristic of French that even the crowd of debased and drunken mendicants suggested to him other ideas than those of mere disgust. They seemed to him excellent raw material of Christian workers—

"Their wandering, mendicant habits, and the way they intrude themselves on all classes of the community, and the awe, if not respect, which they inspire, render them capable, if under the influence of the Gospel, of being useful colporteurs or strolling preachers."

It would probably be untrue to describe French as a successful missionary; he certainly was by no means a popular preacher in the judgment of English congregations; he was too long, too enthusiastic, and too confused. It may, however, be doubted whether the effect produced by his personality did not outweigh his deficiencies as a preacher. His straightforward courage impressed the most hostile Pagans—

"I found," he writes during a missionary expedition among the Afghans, "no place so successful for gathering a good and attentive audience as making straight for the mosque and inquiring for the moollah. Instead of hanging about the village and having one's object suspected, this was a definite and straightforward object; and besides often meeting in this way on equal terms with the moollah, the khans and other respectable villagers would congregate in the mosque."

It is evident that he exercised a strong fascination upon those who were habitually brought into close contact with him. His colleagues loved, his students adored him. On many occasions, notably during the Indian Mutiny, their devotion showed itself in action, which could leave no doubt of its sincerity. He appreciated their difficulties, as few other men did; and it is impossible to read his correspondence with his converts without gaining greater respect for the native Christians. It cannot be denied that, among the majority of educated Christians, the native converts bear no good name. It is not hard to see the causes of this. Generally speaking, the best members of any religious system are the least accessible to proposals of change; the weaker and less constant are the first to yield to the missionary's appeal. If he can bring to bear political or social influences in support of his message —and there is good reason to think that in some parts of the Mission field such influences are not unknown—the quality of converts is likely to be still poorer. These facts go far to explain the instability of modern converts which weighs so heavily against them in the judgment of Englishmen. Apostasy is amazingly common. The able and well-informed *Times* correspondent in Madagascar has recently reported a striking example of apostasy. The converted Hovas, who have long enjoyed the highest reputation in missionary circles, are said to be repudiating both the profession and the practice of Protestant Christianity, to the shame and astonishment of the English missionaries, who at some risk to themselves have remained at their posts during the recent campaign. The same facile disposition which explained their conversion, explains also their apostasy.

It is, however, easy to be unjust to native Christians. The profession of Christianity is often beset by greater diffi-

culties than any which we have experienced. That, in spite of these, converts should be made, argues real conviction, and not a little moral courage. We are apt, moreover, to expect too much from these neophytes. No student of the New Testament needs to be reminded that in Apostolic days the conduct of Christians left much to be desired. Indeed, a knowledge of the most recent missionary experience is perhaps not the least efficient preparation for the study of the earliest missionary records. The modern missionary has to deal with the same gross moral offences, the same startling practical abuses, sometimes the same strange doctrinal vagaries, as those which S. Paul rebuked in the Gentile Churches of which he was the founder. Again, it is easy to institute comparisons between ancient and modern Missions greatly to the disparagement of the latter. The pace of conversion appears so slow. The quality of missionary seems so commonplace; the procedure of Missions so prosaic. We pass from the thrilling story of primitive Missions, where the victory of the Cross proceeds among circumstances of romance and miracle, to the dull and spiritless "reports" of the latest successors of S. Patrick, S. Boniface, and S. Columba. The transition is too sudden; the difference is too painful. We are tempted to pronounce modern Missions little better than an imposture; but we forget how distance lends enchantment to our view of the past. We fail to realise how slow, intermittent, filled with failures, stained with scandals, the actual process of those famous missionary achievements actually was. We forget how superficial the conversions of Catholic history were. The Christianity of the English in the centuries that followed the conversion was little more than the old Paganism veneered with Christian observances. Far into the Middle Ages the Church found it necessary to wage war with the heathen practices to which the common people obstinately clung. Nor must it be forgotten that the Christianity of Europe at this moment is largely nominal. A well-known East-End clergyman is reported to have exclaimed in answer to an inquiry as to the spiritual condition of his parish, "My parish is full of baptized heathen!" The Bishop of London has quite recently made public statistics, which show that a mere fraction of the population is in communion with the National Church in the

capital of the Empire. These facts may well mitigate the harshness of the judgment which we are tempted to pass on the Christian communities of Asia and Africa.

On S. Thomas's Day, December 21, 1877, French was consecrated as first Bishop of Lahore in Westminster Abbey. Ten years later, on the same day, he resigned his See. Few episcopates have been richer in labours and in results. We have already alluded to his official connection with the Government of India which his position as Bishop involved. Here we may notice his strong affection for soldiers, a sentiment which during the Afghan War of 1878–79 found memorable expression. He visited the British camps in the neighbourhood of Candahar, and endeared himself to all ranks by his frank fellowship and ready service.

"Thus far, I think," he writes, "those to whom my new work seems to have been most blessed are the British soldiers, but the natives keep their hold upon me rather determinately, and claim my sympathy and co-operation in what concerns them; and you may be sure this is no sorrow or trouble to me, whatever labour may be involved. Thus far I have been preserved wonderfully in health, more than I could have dared to hope, yet I feel it is a severe strain sometimes; and having felt it necessary to be a teetotaller (the soldiers in one camp made me take the pledge twenty-six times one night after a lecture! as they like my individualising plan), I cannot take stimulants to keep up brain power."

For his services during the campaign the Bishop was awarded the Afghan war-medal. The impression made on the soldiers is well illustrated by the expression publicly used by the colonel in command of a regiment which had suffered from cholera. After warmly thanking him for his work during the visitation, he said, with a bright smile, "If there is a forlorn hope to be led, we will follow you to a man."

His episcopal responsibilities did not lessen his own ardour for missionary preaching. At the request of the Bishop of London, he undertook a visitation of the Church Missionary Society's stations in Persia. This undertaking was commended to him by many considerations. The Persian language is generally spoken in Northern India, and he desired to become proficient in its use. In visiting Persia, he was following the

footsteps of his hero, Henry Martyn, who also had devoted himself to linguistic study. As a student of history, he was attracted to the land which has played so great a part in history: to an ardent Christian, Persia had special interest as one of the "Bible lands." The record of this expedition is rich in personal incidents, and in really fine descriptions of scenery. The ruins of Persepolis greatly impressed him. It is evident that constant travel had quickened rather than blunted his faculty of observation. The following account of his interview with a great Persian official is equally interesting and characteristic:—

"The chief event of this day was a visit in the city to the Zill-i-Sultan (Shadow of the Sultan), Hazrat-i-Wala, the heir-apparent to the Persian throne probably. . . . After a ride of three miles, we dismounted at the gate of the palace, and walked through two or three courts to an inner court with a rose garden. A crowd of people were hanging about almost to the door of the chamber, in which the prince sat in a corner on pillows and shawls, with a single attendant,—a governor of Yazd, I understood. The prince did not arise, but beckoned to us to sit on chairs, and asked about me and my office in India, and about the Viceroy. I told him of Lord Ripon's interest in education, and the wish of the Punjabis to be better instructed in morals. In this the prince seemed to take no interest. Bruce presented a well-bound copy of the Gospel to the prince, his new version of it, thus gaining the permission which Henry Martyn could not obtain. I took part by rising from my seat in the presentation, and told him that this was the greatest treasure of princes. I told him about Daniel and his prophecies of Christ and the coming kingdom. He was ignorant apparently of his connection with Persepolis, and of the coming of the Saviour again he seemed not to wish to hear. A picture by his side showed the looseness of his morals, but Bruce says he is reputed to be much more pure in morals than formerly. On the whole the visit was very disappointing; he seemed a mixture of Pilate and Felix, and would not be drawn to any serious thought apparently. He rose and shook hands friendlily when we parted after half an hour's chat. Bruce told him how many languages I understood. I told him one letter of the know-

ledge of God was worth all the books of the philosophers. He fights hard with the moollahs, I believe, the battle of religious liberty, wishing that Christianity and Judaism and Babism should be religions permitted by the State so far as that bloodshed in religious feuds should be prohibited."

An editorial note informs us, on the authority of Dr. Bruce, that the only remark vouchsafed by this Persian Gallio in acknowledgment of the Gospel presented to him was, "It is a pity you were not better occupied!"

During his Persian visit, and again five years later, after his resignation of his bishopric, when he traversed the country from the Persian Gulf to Palestine, French came much in contact with the Oriental Churches, and his relations with them throw light on the interesting question of his own ecclesiastical position. He appears to have always exhibited the greatest deference to the Church authorities of these ancient but depressed communities. He was received by them with much cordiality. They frankly recognised his episcopal character; he joined as Bishop in their services, and received the Holy Communion according to their uses. The significance of this courtesy is, however, somewhat diminished by the Bishop's very intimate relations with the Presbyterian Missions. It is evident that French formed a much higher opinion of the Eastern Churches than is common in this country. He describes their clergy not rarely in very laudatory terms; and his language is the more noteworthy since he clearly had scant sympathy with much of their church practice. His journal bears abundant testimony to the proselytising ardour of the Roman Church: and the courteous relations which obtained everywhere else seem to have been exchanged for mutual suspicion in the case of that communion. "To the inquiry of what sort of Christian he was, the Bishop answered, 'Katulik la Papaviya' (Catholic not Papal), a formula he constantly rehearsed." French was far too just a man to withhold credit even from his ecclesiastical antagonists. Writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1888, he thus describes the Roman Church in Assyria—

"You will long since have been informed of the vast and steadily growing influence and almost authority the Latin Church exercises in Mosul by State support from France and

from Constantinople, by the wealth showered upon and into it, the splendour of its churches . . . and the compact marshalling of educational forces, the attractive beauty of their services, and persuasiveness of their preaching in French and Arabic. . . . Somehow the thought must strike a casual observer that the monuments of Nineveh of the past pale before the prospective plan and policy of a Church which loves to revive empires, of which it shall wear or distribute the crowns. Most of all, however, they are buttressed up by their admirable and judicious school system, *i.e.* for church purposes; and by requiring periodical visits to Rome of all their chief bishops and priests won over from Eastern Churches, and better still, by the laborious and, I should judge from what I learn and see, *exemplary* lives of their clergy and sisterhoods."

This is high praise, and it is frankly spoken. It is not hard to understand how, in spite of his great missionary services, French became an object of suspicion in Salisbury Square. The question so often addressed to him by Orientals was mooted in Protestant circles at home; his evangelical orthodoxy was distinctly doubtful. French had been trained in the narrow Evangelical school; and there are not lacking evidences that some of its prejudices clung to him to the end of his life. His letters, however, record a process of development; and it is evident that, long before his death, he had definitely severed himself from the sectarian proclivities of his earlier life. His intellect was too robust, his learning too extensive, his sympathies too broad, to permit of his being a satisfactory representative of the Church Missionary Society. His elevation to the episcopate necessarily loosened the ties which bound him to that Society, while it brought into exercise that high notion of episcopal authority which, originally derived from his ecclesiastical studies, had been strengthened by his personal observation of the evils of religious individualism in the Mission field. In his latter years he was wont to describe himself as a moderate High Churchman, and it is evident that he felt himself less and less at ease among Evangelicals as time passed. His last missionary undertaking was not supported by the Church Missionary Society, mainly, in his own belief, because of the distrust which the Committee

felt of his soundness in the matter of "Protestantism." In truth, the texture of his mind was genuinely Catholic in the best sense of the word. We have seen how he habitually directed himself by the guidance of the great missionaries of Catholic history. He constantly studied the Fathers; S. Bernard was his companion on his missionary expeditions; "his books were the weightiest part of his baggage." The great French divines held a place in his regard only second to that held by the primitive Fathers. Dr. Pusey he esteemed as "one of the great saints of this century, though in some points certainly to be condemned." He was a devoted admirer of Archbishop Benson, whose famous ritual judgment he judged to be "quite a historical epoch in Church of England annals." Bishop Bickersteth of Japan, who was for some years his chaplain, contributes a most attractive description of his habit of life, from which we confine ourselves to a single extract—

"Emphatically he was among those who followed the apostolic model in giving themselves to prayer as well as the ministry of the word. 'We will keep that room, please, as an oratory; we shall need the help,' I can remember his saying, when we reached a dâk bungalow where we were to spend two or three days. Those of us who, as a rule, prefer written to extempore prayers, would probably have made an exception in favour of those which the Bishop offered, largely composed as they were of scriptural phrases linked together with great brevity and skill. At times he carried fasting so far as to weaken his strength for the work which had immediately to be done. He studied with care, and made frequent use of the chief devotional manuals. His love of hymns was intense. Like other saintly souls, he found in them the greatest support; and though he was not a musician, and found difficulty in keeping in tune, he would insist on singing them on his journeys."

He called himself a "moderate High Churchman," but it may perhaps be doubted whether he could rightly be numbered in the ranks of any party or section. He had a mind large enough to say, like Mother Angelica Arnauld, "I am of all saints' order, and all saints are of my order." The genuine originality and independence of his character would always

have prevented him from becoming "a good party man." He had perhaps the defect of his virtues. It is impossible to read his Life without perceiving signs of a strain of impracticableness which must have made him a trying person in the eyes of secretaries and committees. He loathed advertising, and never shone in Exeter Hall. His unworldliness probably exposed him to much imposition. Occasionally it seems possible to discover a consciousness of this in his journals. He seems to have distributed books somewhat recklessly; every greedy native clamouring for his copies of the Gospel was transfigured by his enthusiasm into a genuine seeker after truth. In Cashmere a youth handed back torn the book he had eagerly taken. French notes the occurrence in his diary, and adds the remark, "Must give to boys and youths no more!"

The importance now attached in religious circles to that counsel of perfection—the reunion of Christendom—gives special interest to French's testimony to the mischiefs resulting from the existing anarchy. Quite early in his Indian career he had formed a strong opinion on the matter. "I fear Latitudinarianism and perfect liberty of private judgment," he wrote, "far more than I fear Romanism." He regarded with anxiety the movement for a new Indian Church, which, he thought, would start with the natural and laudable desire "to escape from the divisions and discussions of ancient Christendom," but would speedily advance to a repudiation of the faith itself. He endeavoured to propitiate the legitimate impatience of merely Western controversies by leading his students to the study of the earlier centuries of Christian history—

"I like them to know the habits and customs of worship and discipline in the Early Church, which were often so much more Oriental and more free from stiffness than our English liturgical services, borrowed so largely from Rome. What with Plymouthism, the Baptists, and a variety of American sects, there is danger of a most disorganised and undisciplined state of things being normal among us, and this makes me wish they should have some groundwork of primitive church ordinance and discipline to frame themselves upon. You in England will hardly be able to appreciate the necessity for this as we can, so many of the Dissenting missionaries teach-

ing that each man's private judgment, guided by the Bible, is to be his supreme arbiter of truth, next, of course, to the European missionary, who would fain be Church, and Pope, and King, and everything."

Yet though he appreciated the historic claims of the episcopate, and yielded to none in maintaining its practical value, he could not bring himself to refuse communion with non-Episcopalians—

"These dear, good American missionaries and professors will sit much nearer to the Lamb at His supper table, I believe, than I shall; and I should blush, if admitted there, to think that I had warned them off the eucharistic table on earth."

Of one religious body, the Salvation Army, he writes in language of unqualified condemnation; and in view of the persistence with which the merits of that sect and its claims on public support are pressed, we think that this judgment by an unquestionably well-qualified authority has a considerable value—

"It is a trial to us," he wrote to Mr. Knox in 1886, that the Salvation Army lies in wait to draw away and alienate from us some of the best and holiest of our converts. Some of the most faithful and wholly consecrated among them they have lately inveigled and carried off to England for what they call their 'International Congress.' The bragging, vaunting spirit of the body is becoming so offensive and shocking to those in whom is anything of the meekness and gentleness of Christ, and the sectarian spirit taking such almost demoniacal possession of them, one must fear a terrible collapse some day of the whole system, which would, one fears, bring sad reproach and disgrace to the Christian name. I reasoned a long time, about a month since, with a new convert, trained by our most apostolic missionary, Mr. Bateman. He was quite pestered with telegrams to join the International Congress. I held him back for a time, but at length a more pressing and coaxing telegram persuaded him to go. How much money they must have spent in mere telegrams of this kind!"

He wrote rather contemptuously of the affectionate language towards the Eastern Churches used by some English

Churchmen, and expressed his belief that the "newly-stirred desire of self-reform," which is admittedly the most hopeful element in the ecclesiastical outlook of Oriental Christianity, was mainly due to the educational labours of the American Presbyterians. He noted with delight "a curious instance of practical reunion" in Tunis, where, in the absence of the Greek priest, an English clergyman "took baptisms and funerals in the Greek Church."

At the end of 1887, Bishop French laid down, amid numerous expressions of regard and regret, the diocesan charge which he had worthily borne for ten years. He had done much that could be seen and registered; the fine cathedral of Lahore was itself a noble memorial of his episcopate; probably he had effected much more, the value of which will become apparent as time passes. He was now more than sixty years old, and he had lived a hard life. To spend the brief remainder of his days in peaceful repose at home in the society of his family, from which he had lived an exile for so long, might have seemed the natural conclusion of his arduous career. It is manifest, however, that in resigning his bishopric French had little idea of retiring from active work. He was giving place to that purely evangelistic zeal which ever chafed against the administrative duties of the episcopate, and clamoured for freer course and wider reach. His linguistic ambition was strong as ever; "I have always been anxious to learn to talk Arabic as it is spoken in so many missionary lands," he writes to his son, and the rest of his life was actually devoted to an heroic attempt to master that difficult language, and, having mastered it, to use it in the very centre of the Moslem world.

On 5th January 1888 he left India and travelled slowly through the Turkish Empire to Beyrout, where he stayed to deal with his immense correspondence. For ten months he lived in Syria and Palestine, studying colloquial Arabic, and carrying on missionary work, wherever opportunity offered. It was reported to him that opinions were expressed in some quarters which seemed to convey censures on his life, as if he were insufficiently employed. He was the humblest of men, but he resented this injustice. "As if my nine or ten hours a day of hard work were mere idling or self-pleasing!"

he wrote with legitimate indignation. In the spring of 1889 he returned to England, and for eighteen months he stayed at home, advocating the claims of Mission work, and maturing his project for assaulting the centre of Moslem orthodoxy—

"I am trying to work at Arabic as if I were to go to the East again," he wrote in January 1890, but I often fear this will not be permitted to me. I fear I should do so little good with a brain so weakened; yet surely to die in the Mission field is a wondrous honour, if Bishop Steere and Dr. Pfander spoke truly."

He received but scant sympathy from the recognised Missionary authorities. "The C.M.S. is closed against me, I fear, as the penalty of my High Churchmanship." He wrote still more clearly of his plans in October of that year—

"I propose a journey for a few weeks or months, or more as God may appoint, to Egypt *viâ* Tunis, to perfect myself in the Arabic tongue, and to inquire what is being done for Mohammedan missions most effectively in those parts."

In November 1890 he finally left England, in order to "undertake a fresh spiritual crusade, to roll back the tide of Arab conquest, and plant the Cross above the Crescent." In Tunis he found occasion to criticise sharply the spiritual state of Cardinal Lavigerie's diocese. It is odd to read that the famous Roman advocate for temperance "has got most of the prizes at the Paris Exhibition for the finest vines and wines in which Carthage excels." His plans were still very indefinite. The one clear duty was the study of Arabic. Six hours daily he worked at the language with native teachers; he habitually associated with the native population in order to gain facility in expression; but his labour was darkened by the consciousness of increasing infirmity, and, as we read his letters, a sense of desertion—

"My work-day is drawing fast towards its evening shadows," he wrote to a friend; and added, with reference to his life in England, "the Societies cared little to get help from me. . . . Being of neither of the two great parties out and out, I fell between the two boats, and all this helped me to see my way Eastward again, besides a strong and growing sense of duty, and of not being released yet from my missionary vows."

In December he formally offered his services to the Church Missionary Society, finally choosing Muscat as the centre of his projected mission. His offer was rejected by the Society, but his mind was made up. He would, to use his own words, "stand as a doorkeeper waiting to open it to any younger and stronger men whom it may please God to send to occupy this post." Accompanied by Mr. Maitland, he established himself in Muscat, and began his work. Difficulties of all kinds arose; the Arabs were fanatical; the British agent was unsympathetic. French was indomitable; he lived the life of a fakir; and his asceticism appealed to the Arabs from whom his message could secure scant attention. He gained entrance into the mosques, and was permitted to preach the Gospel in the temples of Islam. The villagers told him he was no Englishman, but an Arab; and on one occasion "a large party of Arabs" laboured to convert him to the Moslem faith—

"It was a new experience to me," he observes, "but useful as enabling me better to understand the feeling an Arab or Hindu would have in being so approached with a view to changing a faith dear to him as life itself, and so with the Moslems it usually is."

Mr. Maitland left him; he was absolutely isolated in the society of the most fanatical Mohammedans in the world. The strain of his labours grew ever severer as his strength failed. He was bringing himself to acquiesce in failure. "I don't think that I shall ever be sorry that I made an attempt, how feeble and unsuccessful soever, to reach the poor Arabs." The end was not far distant. "If we would win these Moslem lands for Christ, we must die for them," he had said prophetically to Dr. Bruce. He himself was destined to illustrate his words. He had resolved to penetrate to the interior of the peninsula; but he had suffered much from fever, and was in no condition for travel. His purpose, however, was firm, and he began his journey. Beyond Sib, a town about thirty miles from Muttra, he was unable to proceed. He was carried back to Muscat, where he died on the 14th of May 1891.

We said that this Life provided the best defence of Christian Missions and the most searching criticism of mis-

sionary methods. That such a life should be possible, is evidence, if any be needed, that the power of the Gospel to seize and possess men is as great in the nineteenth century as in any previous age; that such a missionary should find himself suspected and practically repudiated by the principal Missionary Society of the English Church, suggests cause for much searching of heart. We have claimed for these volumes a permanent place in the literature of Missions. We commend them to the study of all who are tempted to think that heroism and sainthood are the peculiar properties of the past. We believe that French's failure at Muscat will be potent for good, for in the spiritual sphere there are defeats that really serve the cause which they seem at first sight to imperil.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

[*December* 1897]

THE Encyclical Letter of the Lambeth Conference gives great prominence to the subject of Foreign Missions. The Bishops declare that it is "the work that at the present time stands in the first rank of all the tasks they have to fulfil." The numerous and representative committee appointed to consider the subject drew up a long, careful, and comprehensive report, marked equally by sobriety of judgment and evangelistic ardour. Throughout this remarkable document there runs a strain of confidence which is almost startling. We recall descriptions of missionary work of a very different character; descriptions, indeed, which can hardly claim so weighty an authority, but may, perhaps, be credited with a more discriminating independence. The enthusiasm of the Bishops undoubtedly reflects the prevailing sentiment of their dioceses. A wave of evangelistic enterprise would seem to be passing over Christendom. All Churches and denominations have been affected. Nor may the phenomenon be regarded as limited to the sphere of Christianity. We hear of a similar quickening of religious zeal in Mohammedan, Buddhist, and Brahmanic spheres. It would, perhaps, be no exaggeration of the facts to say that the revival of proselytising is coextensive with the great world-religions. This general awakening of Religion is a very remarkable phenomenon. It has synchronised with the immense development of research and speculation in the sphere conveniently designated scientific,—a development which seems to menace the bases of all religion, and has not rarely, in its Western birthplace, taken the character of definite antagonism to the Christian faith. The coincidence challenges reflection. Leaving on one side the general discussion, we propose in this paper

to consider the Foreign Missions of Christianity from the impartial standpoint of the average citizen.

On Christian assumptions, Foreign Missions can hardly fail to kindle enthusiasm. If on no higher ground, they justify themselves to the instinct of self-preservation. Every non-national religion must proselytise or perish. Christian History carries on its surface no more certain testimony than that Missions are necessary to the well-being of a Church. The depressed and degraded condition of the Greek Churches, both Orthodox and Heterodox, in Mohammedan lands, may be largely explained by the prohibition of proselytising under which they exist. It is an axiom in Christian circles that zeal for Missions is the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*, and no thoughtful student of history will dispute the fact. The present enthusiasm in the missionary cause is, however, admitted to be of very recent growth. To quote the Lambeth Encyclical: "We have special reasons to be thankful to God for the awakened and increasing zeal of our whole communion for this primary work of the Church, the work for which the Church was commissioned by our Lord. For some centuries it may be said we have slumbered. The duty has not been quite forgotten, but it has been remembered only by individuals and Societies; the body as a whole has taken no part. The Book of Common Prayer contains very few prayers for missionary work. It hardly seems to have been present to the minds of our great authorities and leaders in compiling that Book, that the matter should be in the thoughts of every one who calls himself a Christian, and that no ordinary service should be considered complete which did not plead amongst other things for the spread of the Gospel. We are beginning, though only beginning, to see what the Lord would have us do." Very largely this new zeal for Missions is but the ecclesiastical aspect of imperialism. The "Little Englander" is as obsolete in the domain of spiritual politics as in that of mundane. Both Church and State have grown out of insularity, under the coercion of the same influences; but this is not the whole explanation. Two circumstances of widely different character have, perhaps, tended to create the awakening of evangelistic zeal, upon which the Lambeth Fathers comment. The one

has been mainly operative in the Roman Church, the other in the numerous religious organisations which it is the convenient fashion to designate Protestant. The triumph of the Jesuit wire-pullers at the Vatican Council in 1870 necessarily discouraged all intellectual activity (outside certain narrow limits) within the Roman Communion. The ablest theologians and historians were either silenced or driven into revolt. The only sphere left open to enthusiasm and ability was the sphere of practical effort. As in Revolutionary France, the fact that all avenues to genius were practically closed save only that of the Army, tended directly to military efficiency; so in modern Rome the theological revolution of 1870 has powerfully stimulated interest in Foreign Missions, and raised the average level of the missionaries. The proselytising value of the new dogma has apparently excused, in Roman minds, the violence done to history and to reason. A passionate missionary ardour has marked the victory of Vaticanism, and—paradoxical as it may seem—the intellectual ruin of Religion has directly ministered to its rapid diffusion. Nowhere does the Roman Church wear so noble and Christian an aspect as in the Mission field. This is the reluctant admission of her foes, as well as the legitimate pride of her members. Outside the Roman Church a more creditable cause has worked in the same direction. The advance of historical science has nowhere led to more remarkable results than in the theological sphere. The exact study of the early Christian literature, which has been, perhaps, the most fruitful achievement of the last two generations, has directed the attention of Christians to the original aspect of their faith, among which the missionary aspect is naturally paramount. The decay of theological belief and the impatience of ecclesiastical tradition, which have marked the century, have ministered to the same result. Above all, the Life of the Divine Founder of Christianity has been brought into new prominence. In recovering the character of discipleship, Christianity has returned to its earliest precedents, which are evangelistic. Inevitably a Church which habitually regards the primitive model must be a missionary Church. The great Orthodox Church of Russia has not stood outside the influence of missionary

enthusiasm, but in its case the political or racial development has been obviously paramount. The Slavonic movement, so potent in the political sphere, takes necessarily, under the conditions of Russian life, an ecclesiastical character. Church and State are not so much united as amalgamated, so that the expansion of the one involves the expansion of the other.

Foreign Missions, then, have for intelligible reasons justified themselves generally to the Christian conscience in this century; but can as much be said when the specifically Christian standpoint is abandoned, and the subject is discussed from the standpoint of the citizen, to whom religions and Churches appear estimable or pernicious precisely as they affect for good or ill the course of national politics and the development of national character?

It must be admitted that the answer to this question cannot be quickly or confidently returned. On few subjects is educated opinion more deeply divided. So far as the division indicates a definitely antichristian bias, it may be fairly discounted. Clearly the man who objects to Christianity as intellectually false, or as morally enervating, is not likely to find any public advantage in its diffusion. His objection lies not against the policy of Missions, but against the religion in whose interest that policy is adopted. This, however, is rarely the case in England. For the most part educated English opinion regards Christianity with something more than tolerance. The spread of religion is approved as directly ministering to the moral resources of the nation; and, conversely, the decline of religious organisations is deplored as an indication of moral decay. But within this friendly sphere opinion is by no means unanimous.

The observant Englishman is not attracted by the professional aspect of modern Missions. In his inmost heart he cherishes an ideal of the Christian evangelist, formed, no doubt, more or less consciously on the New Testament, which seems to find little justification in the world of actual fact. Foreign Missions seem to his view merely a branch of the clerical profession, into which men enter on the normal professional motives, and in which they seek the normal professional success. The solemn language which it is the

fashion to apply to missionaries, as if they were the high-souled servants of a sublime vocation, strikes him as almost grotesque. He contrasts the missionary with the civil servant, or the soldier, or even the merchant, and he cannot discover any justification for the lofty claim to self-sacrifice which is as constantly made in the one case as it is unheard of in the other. Nay, he concludes that the balance of self-denial is against the missionary. Thus in the crucial matter of matrimony, which, in the secular sphere, is the synonym for settled position and the domestic comfort which is the correlative of settled position, the missionary cuts a very poor figure beside his lay contemporaries. "The young public servant in India does not marry directly he lands in the country," observes a recognised authority on modern Missions, Dr. Cust, "and yet lives a holy life; he waits until he has learnt his duty, and mastered the language by living among the people. Why should not young missionaries exert the same measure of self-denial? An engagement to marry, made before even the missionary is accepted, throws a doubt upon his motives. It shows an absence of self-consecration."[1] The unprejudiced observer is not favourably impressed by missionary reports. He distrusts the statistics, and he dislikes the domestic intelligence. "The marriage bell," says Dr. Cust, "sounds cheerily through ever page of the Reports, the Agenda of the sub-Committees, and the Agenda of every Committee, Corresponding or General. Weddings and births are the conspicuous feature, and every death of an infant is recorded with proper terms of sympathy. The Report assumes the characteristics of the Matrimonial and Family News."

Moreover, the missionary is no longer the sole, or even the chief medium through which information about the "heathen" reaches the British public. Everywhere his version of the facts stands in comparison with other versions. The audience he can count on is not so receptive as was once the case; nay, so far has the critical process now proceeded, that uncorroborated missionaries' evidence is scarcely considered evidence at all. It would be an error to interpret this scepticism of missionary statements as an indication of anti-

[1] *Missionary Methods*, p. 210. [Luzac & Co.]

religious prejudice. It has its explanations in the discovered errors of the past, and the suspected conditions of the present. Compared with the civil servant, with the independent traveller, with the army officer, even with the higher type of merchant, the average missionary does not command confidence. He is ignorant almost always, and by necessary consequence he is prejudiced. He is generally in a thoroughly false position, the reporter and judge of his own achievements. He works under thoroughly bad conditions, for his reports are the advertisements of a money-raising Society, and they are addressed to constituents, the rank and file of the denominations, who are as greedy of sensation as they are credulous of prodigies. The country swarms with returned missionaries. This is natural enough on the analogy of the professions; but the average man chafes against the analogy. The returned missionaries, moreover, do not help matters. There are exceptions, but, speaking generally, they do not commend the missionary cause. No figure is more dreaded in the pulpit than that of the "deputation." Men reflect in amazement, as they endure the annual ordeal of the missionary sermons, on the mingled hardihood and fatuity which could assault the venerable Religions of the East with such instruments. It is notorious that the dissatisfaction has now proceeded to such lengths, that deliberate efforts are being made to replace the "deputations" by home clergy who have "got up the subject."

So far we have merely transcribed the more superficial objections which find common expression. More serious fault is found when, appearances being set aside, the actual working of Foreign Missions is investigated.

The unprejudiced inquirer is startled to discover that no attempt is made to mitigate in the face of the heathen the monstrous anarchy of Christendom. The competition of Churches and sects would be ludicrous, were it not so deplorable. The scandal is gross, the stumbling-block great. From the purely evangelistic point of view, this overlapping and mutual hostility are serious matters, involving large waste of income and much hindrance to work; but even from the civic standpoint they are no trifles. The rival evangelists have been known to carry their polemical ardour to such lengths as to endanger the public peace. Thus in

Madras a few years ago the Government found it necessary to issue regulations prohibiting rival preachers from coming within two hundred yards of one another. The pacification of Uganda is still fresh in the public mind. The Lambeth Encyclical has spoken cautiously but wisely on this very serious matter: "We think it our duty to declare that in the Foreign Mission field, where signal spiritual blessings have attended the labours of missionaries not connected with our Communion, a special obligation has arisen to avoid, as far as possible without compromise of principle, whatever tends to prevent the due growth and manifestation of that 'unity of the Spirit' which should ever mark the Church of Christ."

It would seem plainly desirable in the common interest of all Christian Missions that the leaders of the Churches which strive for spiritual empire should follow the precedent of secular diplomacy, and agree to the delimitation of their respective "spheres of influence" in the continents they equally covet. In the unconverted world there is room for all; and an evident advantage to the common cause could not fail to arise from the termination of rivalries which are equally wanton, wasteful, and scandalous. No legitimate convictions need be sacrificed in the process. Not even the wildest zealot can confuse an allocation of "vineyards" with a surrender of principle.

Then the inquirer is amazed to learn that the intellectual outfit of the missionaries rarely includes any thorough knowledge of the religious systems which they will encounter. Undoubtedly the mischiefs of such defective training are now commonly recognised, but it will be long before any improvement makes its appearance in the mass of missionaries. In India especially the folly of attacking the ancient native religions without a real knowledge of them is manifest. The Moslem, the Buddhist, and the Brahman are no rude pagans, destitute of theology and ignorant of history. They represent powerful religious systems, rooted in the popular mind by immemorial antiquity, rich in treasured traditions, in a profound if erroneous philosophy, in an ample and by no means contemptible literature. Those systems are Oriental in origin and in history; they reflect both the subtlety and the grotesqueness of the Oriental fancy; they correspond to the

needs of Oriental life; if it must be admitted that they condone and even encourage a grossness of vice which shocks the Western conscience, yet it may not be denied that in certain directions their moral authority is both powerful and beneficent. Christianity, moreover, is not unknown to the more cultivated natives of India. They have studied it in Western literature and in the lives of Europeans; and they are not always led by their studies to think highly of its power either to command the intellect or to govern the conduct of its professed adherents. The late Bishop French of Lahore, a truly great missionary, describes the formidable character of the opposition which such men present to the missionary's witness—

"None can tell the constant and very serious difficulty which the want of a sufficient library entails in a missionary's experience, when sharp, shrewd objectors are buzzing like bees all around him, taunting him with seeming discrepancies of the sacred text, thrusting sore at him with difficulties and objections laboriously compiled from the works of bold, irreverent, or inadvertent Christian writers, so called, or those of reckless sceptics, the shortest and most pointed refutations of which he may not always be able to bear in memory, and thus the seeming present advantage may seem to lie on the side of the adversaries of the faith." [1]

The members of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi, and of the Cowley Fathers' Mission at Poonah—three conspicuous examples of a type of Mission which unfortunately is not normal, but which goes far to justify hopes which, apart from it, would be chimerical indeed—all bear the same witness.

To the reflective outsider, indeed, the close and sympathetic study of the ethnic religions would seem not less demanded by intelligent Christian belief than by obvious considerations of practical wisdom. If the doctrine of the Incarnation be true (and none can question that it is the constitutive doctrine of historic Christianity), then it would seem to follow that the whole religious movement of mankind must in some sense vindicate for itself a true relation to Him who is "the Light which lighteth every man coming into the world." Unless Christianity can fit itself on to the religious positions

[1] *Life of T. Valpy French*, vol. i. p. 162.

which men have reached, so as to justly claim their acceptance as the true completion of systems which it at once authenticates and supersedes, it would seem impossible for us to escape from the heresy of dualism. To ascribe (as is constantly the case) to the craft of Satan the religions which represent the spiritual aspirations of the ethnic prophets, and which have approved themselves to many generations as competent to sustain the spirit in its arduous conflict with the flesh, is to the reflective Christian a melancholy and disastrous perversion, infinitely discreditable to Christianity. Yet it is the common assumption of the missionary reports.

It is not only in the Mission field that this ignorance of the average missionary as to the history and theology of the religions he attacks has wide and baleful effect. Christianity in England suffers from those shocking burlesque descriptions of ethnical faiths which are still—in spite of many protests—the stock-in-trade of the orators at missionary meetings. Abroad the wanton insults to native piety are not only utterly indefensible in themselves, but are also not rarely the occasions of disturbances of the public peace. In India, the principal field of Missions, the danger of social mischief is very great. The deep racial difference between the native races and the Europeans by whom they are governed, inevitably stamps with a common official or quasi-official character all members of the ruling caste. The fanaticism of the missionary provokes resentment, not only against himself and his creed, but against the British Government. The religious neutrality of that Government is indeed jealously guarded and constantly proclaimed; but, for all practical purposes, it is broken through when gross insults are inflicted on native beliefs and customs by Europeans. Exasperated men are not apt to draw nice distinctions; and probably proselytising by the ruling race will always in the native mind take an official character. This is a domestic danger, when the missionaries labour within the Empire; elsewhere the intemperance of zeal unchecked by knowledge may endanger the peace of the world. Individual zealots may, indeed, declare themselves ready to run all risks, and to resign the safeguards of their citizenship; but, practically, they cannot do so. No European Government can afford to abandon its

citizens to the outrages of barbarians, even when those outrages have been provoked by indefensible conduct. The peril deserved by the fanatic is shared by the traveller and the merchant; the missionary may and ought to be abandoned, but the European must receive the protection of his country. The mischief is twofold. On the one hand, international peace is needlessly disturbed; on the other hand, the sinister union of the Gospel and the Gunboat becomes normal throughout the heathen world.

So far the unprejudiced inquirer will have encountered defects which are inherent in Missions as at present organised. Professionalism has lowered the motives of missionary enterprise; as motives degenerate an inferior type of missionary comes on the scene. The standard of education must always be largely determined by the intellectual quality of the persons for whom it is designed. If it be the case that the intellectual quality of the average student in a Missionary Training College is somewhat poorer than that of the average student in an ordinary Theological College, and the probabilities all point in this direction, then the prospect of improvement in the training of missionaries is not very bright. Professionalism has found an active ally in the degradation of Missions in the Society Method, which is simply the synonym for private venture on commercial lines. The miserable literature which advertises the needs and proclaims the achievements of the missionaries is sufficient condemnation of the system which creates and lives on it. The Society Method involves direct and constant appeal to partisan prejudices. The familiar divisions of the Church of England reproduce and perpetuate themselves abroad for no other reason than the necessity of deferring to the sectional preferences of subscribers. The mutual action of partisanship here and missionary action abroad is deplorable. Professionalism and the Society Method are the twin fountains of the worst mischiefs which hamper Foreign Missions.

That apart from inherent faults of system there should be very grave abuses, will not surprise the inquirer, though the fact will not commend Missions. If India is the scene of missionary blunders, Africa would seem to be the scene of missionary scandals.

"In the length and breadth of British India," writes Dr. Cust, "during a quarter of a century, I never heard a breath of scandal against any missionary, Protestant or of the Church of Rome. But in Africa my experiences are sadly different: *ἀεὶ φέρει Λιβύη τι καίνον.*" Even in Africa a broad distinction is apparent. "No case of immorality has come to my knowledge where the missionaries dwell in Brotherhoods, and as Associated Evangelists." Dr. Cust accuses the Missionary Societies of suppressing all references to moral scandals in their Reports, and he speaks with just severity of the proceedings. "When lay and ordained missionaries have been disconnected in considerable numbers for incontinence, the supporters of the Association should be informed: I allude to Africa." There is unhappily a large body of evidence hostile to the character of missionaries in the Dark Continent. Bishop Tugwell [1] has recently found it necessary to warn the British public against bogus "African princes," *i.e.* missionaries who have secured titles and jurisdiction from native potentates in West Africa, and "who come to England and pose as African princes." The Bishop justly observes that "confidence in the integrity of the African is frequently shaken by the conduct of such irresponsible persons." The history of Mr. Stokes has not yet faded from the public memory. That history cast a discreditable sidelight on the character of missionaries in Africa, as well as brought into prominence the judicial methods of the Congo State. These, however, are recognised abuses; the organisers of Missions are beginning, though slowly, to take precautions against them; the difficulties of maintaining any effectual discipline over agents in Africa is not peculiar to Christian denominations. The fair-minded inquirer will be slow to build too much on incidents which are as much evidences of inherent difficulty in the attempt as tokens of censurable laxity in the method. Nor, again, will he place much weight on the generally unfavourable character ascribed to the converts whom the missionaries succeed in detaching from their ancestral religions. There can be no reasonable doubt that the results of missionary endeavour, if inadequate to the exertions made, of which, however, none can really be in a position to judge, and if—which must be

[1] Letter to *Standard*, August 21, 1897.

conceded—reflecting badly on the methods, and even on the character, of the missionaries, yet are not in the main unworthy of Christianity. That the converts should be mostly drawn from the lowest classes of society, is only what Christian history authorises us to expect. It has provoked the mockery of opponents in early times and in our own day; but it involves no real discredit. Even the miserable collapse of the much-vaunted Christianity of the Hovas in Madagascar could be easily paralleled in the history of the conversion of the early English. In face of the evidence of impartial observers, it is impossible to doubt the genuineness of the Uganda martyrdoms, and the sincere devotion of many native converts in India. These examples are not exceptional but well known; there is no reason to suppose that generally modern converts from paganism are, allowances being made for intrinsic inferiority of race, inferior to the earliest European converts.

At this stage in his inquiry the citizen will be in some doubt as to the worth of Missions. On the one hand, bad methods working out in serious difficulties and even gross scandals; on the other hand, here and there wonderful Missions, like those of the Cowley Fathers in India, and the Universities' Mission in Central Africa, which are plainly honourable to Christianity and serviceable to civilisation, and an unquestionable measure of actual success, enough to prohibit the notion that the conversion of Oriental and African races to the religion of Christ is chimerical. Perhaps he will be led to a favourable conclusion as to the civic worth of Foreign Missions by some such considerations as the following.

We, as a nation, have undertaken a heavy responsibility in governing India according to Western notions of law and morality. We may proclaim, and to the best of our powers loyally observe, a policy of religious neutrality, but it will necessarily be limited in its application. We ruthlessly oppressed the Indian conscience when we prohibited the custom of widow-immolation, or the sanguinary rites of Juggernaut. We do not hesitate to ride rough-shod over native sentiment when order or health are endangered. We were within an ace of the criminal folly of interfering with the custom of opium consumption. It would not be sur-

prising if we laid hands on the basal institution of native life—child marriage. The Englishman, accustomed to relegate religion to a very narrow sphere, and to make it a matter of specific observances and subscriptions, does not dream of breaches of the religious neutrality upon which he prides himself as the perfect flower of his unique political wisdom. But everything is religious in India. The zealot who coarsely gibes at the sanctity of the Ganges mud misses the whole meaning of the "idolatry" he ridicules. Religion governs all life, and nothing is too low or too high for its consecration. Thus our "reforms" have the aspect of interferences in the domain of religion. They may be right in spite of this, but they knock the bottom out of our "religious neutrality." These, however, are the least of our interferences with native Religion. We have established a neutral system of education, and have thrown open to the educated a career in the Government service. We have "developed" the country. Railways, telegraphs, etc.,—all the familiar mechanism of Western civilisation,—cover the land. We have encouraged in every possible way knowledge of Western methods, Western habits, Western science. What is all this but a continuous though veiled assault upon Oriental Religion, and the morality which that Religion inculcates and enforces? The real effect of our religious neutrality is to hinder a faithful presentation of Western civilisation. Christianity and the morality of which Christianity is parent and guardian are essential elements in Western civilisation, and, as we should maintain, the best elements. To present that civilisation without teaching its principles, is as theoretically absurd as it is practically pernicious. We disintegrate the faith and morals of India, and we provide no substitute! That is not "religious neutrality," but a policy of irreligion. Between that policy and India stand the Christian Missions, supplying, inadequately indeed, and intermittently, but not altogether ineffectually, the grave defect of the official system. If the worst disaster that can befall any community is moral disintegration, then in the highest interest of the populations of India the English citizen, whose political traditions dictate a policy of "religious neutrality," should exert himself to develope and improve the Christian Missions.

In Africa, considerations of another kind point in the same direction. The course of politics has brought under the control of this country many millions of barbarians. Vast territories now lie open to the speculator, the adventurer, and the trader. The public imagination is on fire with tales of wealth, waiting to be quickly gathered by the bold and enterprising. But mines must be worked, and human labour must be found to work them. Neither the climate nor the toil suits Europeans; the black races from whom the country has been "conquered" are ready to hand. Does any one doubt that under the circumstances gross oppression will *probably* take place? The natives are practically helpless; their masters have every motive to oppress them, and their life is destitute of the most effectual restraints on oppression. Commonly, the sole security for justice and mercy is in the breast of the adventurer; and all human experience demonstrates the powerlessness of justice and mercy against the passion of greed, the pride of race, and the insolence of impunity. Over a large part of Africa the government is in the hands of Chartered Companies. Without venturing a judgment on the policy which thus delegates national responsibilities to groups of individuals, and vests in the same hands the high responsibilities of government and the prosecution of commercial enterprises, we may affirm without fear of contradiction that, within the area of Company Rule, the publicity of life is less, and the chances of oppression proportionably greater. Here, then, is the situation which confers a high national worth on the Christian Missions. Gravely defective in organisation, terribly stained with scandals as they are, yet they, and often they alone, represent to the native races of Africa the better side of European civilisation. They, and perhaps they only, threaten the oppressor with exposure. They are in the forests and plateaus of Africa the Conscience of England. They, and perhaps they only, impose some restraint on the recklessness of greed and the brutality of power.

This is an indirect service, rendered possible by the conditions of the country, but having no obvious connection with the specific work of the missionaries; but no one can study the history of the Universities Mission in Central

Africa, of the Church Missionary Society's Mission in Uganda, of the Presbyterian Missions in the South, without being convinced that, religion altogether apart, these Missions are powerful civilising agents. They introduce among the savages not merely the productions of the Bible Society, but the trades and arts of civilised life. They open new markets to legitimate trade. They lay arresting hand on the worst violences of native life, and add immensely to the sum of human happiness wherever their influence extends. It is difficult to imagine by what other means civilisation could be brought to those rude and simple races; and the thoughtful citizen will hardly need any other reason to determine him to support undertakings so plainly beneficent.

And if, withdrawing his gaze from the distant lands where Missions are at work, he fix it on the national life at home, he will not fail to conclude that in the highest interest of the national character he must support the missionary cause. The unequalled and long-continued prosperity of Britain has not affected wholesomely the tone of public life or the development of the national character. We tend to be self-indulgent, cynical, and vain. We do but illustrate the general law which links these tendencies to national, and, for the matter of that, to individual prosperity. Missions are, in spite of very grave and notorious faults, a standing protest against self-indulgence, cynicism, and vanity. The professional missionary is truly a repulsive spectacle, but he does not monopolise the missionary character. Take away Foreign Missions from the history of Britain during this century, and you would have robbed that history of its most heroic names. No one can have any knowledge of religious society in this country without knowing how noble, unselfish, and courageous is the enthusiasm which carries to the ends of the earth young men and women to whom life in England is rich in promise. They go forth under no illusions; for the records of their predecessors are before them, and those records are eloquent of privation and death. They consecrate with their graves the desperate wastes and pestilential swamps of Africa, the bleak solitudes of Polynesia, the ice-bound plains where the Esquimaux wander, the plague-haunted purlieus of Oriental cities. Those graves perish quickly, the rank

vegetation of the tropics or the all-obliterating snow shroud them from sight; but the tradition of Heroism does not perish. It flows, swollen by a thousand contributions of personal service, ever through the Nation, a stream of holy and gracious influences, fertilising character and beautifying life.

Finally, if the inquirer, moved and consoled by such reflections, consider again the faults of modern Missions which most offended him, he will perceive that, grave as they certainly are, they are not irremediable. Indeed, many of them are slowly but surely being purged away. Even the "professional missionary" would lose his most repellant aspect when once his real character and function were determined. Not a missionary in the true sense at all, but the resident pastor of a native Christian congregation, it is unfair to demand that he should correspond to the true evangelistic type. Compare him with the resident Anglican incumbent, and he will not, save in the article of culture, appear so grotesque. Both are given to reckless marrying, and both tend therefore to poverty and the unspirituality which springs from squalid domestic anxieties; neither can, save in the rarest instances, be conceived of in the heroic category. The true missionary is normally unmarried, unprofessional, heroic. He exists in far greater numbers than is commonly supposed, but it is his habit to be silent about his own performances. If once the line were drawn between the pastoral and the evangelistic vocation, the real nobility of the latter would perhaps again become evident to all, criticism would perforce be hushed before unquestionable sacrifice, and the spectacle of apostolic devotion would become a magnet of ardent and lofty souls. With the right material to work upon, the training of missionaries might be seriously taken in hand. The community, which has the twofold affirmation of Christian history and of contemporary experience, might become the normal instead of the exceptional type of missionary organisation. The missionary might be wholly disconnected with the perilous and humiliating task of money-raising. The private societies might yield place to a more regular and responsible authority. The essential dignity of evangelistic work might be secured, on the one

hand, by jealously guarding against any lowering of the missionary Ideal; and, on the other hand, by insisting upon such conditions of work as would effectually deter all who were not fired by the disinterested passion for souls, which is the common trait of all genuine missionaries. There are numerous indications of a more honest and exacting sense of duty with regard to this task of evangelisation which all Christians must hold to be binding on them, individually and corporately; and among those indications not the least significant or the least hopeful is the earnest and weighty pronouncement of the Fourth Lambeth Conference, to which we referred at the beginning of this article. Missions conceived and carried out in the spirit of that pronouncement can appeal to the interest and support of the reflective citizen scarcely less successfully than to the zeal and devotion of the good Christian. Such Missions already exist. They are destined, we cannot doubt, to draw to themselves in ever increasing measure the homage of national respect and the strength of national support.

THE CHINESE PUZZLE OF MISSIONS

[1900]

LORD SALISBURY'S speech at the great meeting held in Exeter Hall on June 19th to celebrate the Bicentenary of the S.P.G. was a memorable event on many counts. In the history of the Christian Church it would be difficult to find a more suggestive spectacle than that presented by the Prime Minister addressing such a speech to such an audience. As an act of homage to the Church by the principal representative of the State, it would have attracted more notice, were we not so happily accustomed to see our statesmen associate themselves publicly with religious causes. The personal interest of the episode, however, need not here concern us. The Premier seized the opportunity to address a solemn remonstrance to the Church on the matter of missionary methods. He pointed out the altered conditions under which missionaries now have perforce to work, and he urged the obvious duty of revising their procedure accordingly. He illustrated his thesis from the occurrences in China.

"If an Evangelist or an Apostle, a Boniface or a Columba, preached in the Middle Ages, he faced the difficulties, he underwent the martyrdom, and he braved the torments to which he was exposed, and the whole of the great moral and spiritual influence of his self-devotion acted without hindrance upon the people whom he addressed. But now, if a Boniface or a Columba is exposed to these martyrdoms, the result is an appeal to the Consul and the mission of the Gunboat; and, unfortunately, though that cannot be helped, though it is a blame to nobody, though it is far, indeed, from being a blame to our devoted missionaries, though I cannot admit that it is a blame to the secular Government by whom their end is avenged, still it does diminish the purely spiritual aspect and

action of Christian teaching. It does give to men an opportunity and a temptation to attach a different meaning to that teaching, and to suspect it of objects which are far indeed away from the thoughts of those who urge it. Just look at this Chinese matter. You observe that all the people that are slaughtered are Christian. Do you imagine that they are slaughtered simply because the Chinese dislike their religion? There is no nation in the world so indifferent on the subject of religion as the Chinese. It is because they and other nations have got the idea that missionary work is a mere instrument of the secular Government in order to achieve the objects it has in view. That is a most dangerous and terrible snare. I need not say that it is utterly unjust. May I attempt to point the moral?—and that is, that caution and prudence, within the due limitations of devotion and enthusiasm, are the duties of missionaries in a foreign land, who not only are preaching the Gospel, but are also representing to the eyes of the inhabitants to whom they preach the character and the aims of the people from whom they come. . . . It is a terrible dilemma. They cannot renounce, they cannot abandon, they cannot even be lukewarm in the commission which they have received. On the other hand, there is a real danger that if they do not observe the utmost caution, they may cause the loss of many, many lives, and they may attach to the religion which they desire to preach the discredit of being an instrument of territorial greed, and a weapon of that warfare which one secular Power wages against another."

The recent events in China have forced into painful prominence the subject of Foreign Missions. In spite of the abominable cruelties which have marked the action of the Boxers, in spite of the number of their victims, in spite of the natural sympathy felt by the religious denominations in Europe and America for their afflicted co-religionists, the fact is too plain to be denied, that the Boxers are regarded in many quarters without extreme disfavour; they are represented as patriots stirred to desperate measures by the perils threatening their country from the unceasing aggressions of the Western Powers: and, so far as the missionaries are concerned, it is not obscurely hinted that their fate was

in many cases the inevitable consequence, if not the appropriate punishment, of their headlong and ignorant zeal. Popular feeling has not responded to the massacres in China as, four years ago, it responded to the massacres in Armenia, although the former would seem to concern English people more directly and obviously. No doubt the present distraction of the public mind counts for much; even the most irresponsible enthusiasts cannot be altogether indifferent to the risks of agitation at a juncture when the resources of the Empire are so severely taxed; but this does not suffice to explain the present apathy in England towards the Chinese atrocities. The public intelligence distinguishes between the case of the Armenians—peaceful pastoral folk, for the most part, unarmed and unhelped, slaughtered by their hereditary foes by the orders, or at least with the sanction, of their natural Protector—and the case of the Chinese converts, allies and disciples of aliens, themselves the agents of the most formidable enemies of the fatherland, and engaged in a continuous crusade against the venerated customs of the nation. The tolerant and equitable spirit which is native to the best Christians among us, compels the allowance of "extenuating circumstances" to the exasperated Celestials; and this spirit is linked in many minds with a rooted dislike of religious propagandism, and an indifference to all dogmatic considerations which, if, as must be admitted is the case, incompatible with the Christian profession, seem to be strongly justified on grounds of reason, philosophy, policy, and experience.

"The Missionary Problem" has therefore suddenly come into great prominence; but, though much discussed, it is not really faced. When the [late] Bishop of London says that "missionary methods may, and do, need readjustment to the general conditions of intercourse between nations which prevail from time to time," I am not sure whether he speaks an obvious truth, or suggests a formidable error. For if "the general conditions of intercourse between nations which prevail from time to time" are to determine evangelistic methods, it would seem impossible to withhold approval from Charlemagne's mode of converting the Saxons, or the Jesuit mode of converting the Chinese. Yet the first outrages

every Christian principle; and the last was, perforce, repudiated even by the Vatican. How ought the conditions of intercourse between England and India to make missionary methods in the latter country to differ from those in China, where unquestionably the conditions of intercourse are different? The claims of truth are, of course, the same in both countries, and the requirements of charity are the same. That, in the one case, the missionary can denounce the "heathen" religion with comparative security, cannot authorise his doing so if such denunciation be itself an offence against charity; that, in the other case, a similar procedure will involve the missionary in risks of violent death, cannot exempt him from adopting it if loyalty to truth so require. Conditions of intercourse between nations may multiply or restrict evangelistic opportunities, increase or diminish the missionary's hardships and dangers, but they cannot alter by one hair's-breath the methods he adopts, so far as those methods represent his conception of duty, the texture of his own religious conviction, and the attitude he deliberately adopts towards the religions he seeks to dispossess and replace with his own. Again, when that veteran of missionary apologists, Sir John Kennaway, simplifies the problem into the naked issue of obedience to a quasi-military command to preach the Gospel to every creature, he takes for granted that we understand rightly the content of that formidable phrase "preaching the Gospel," which assuredly no two men precisely agree in defining, over which the Churches are in open opposition, and which, clearly, is the crux of the problem to be solved.

It will, perhaps, be serviceable to state at once certain fixed points, for such I shall hold that they are, in the discussion of this vexed, difficult, and urgent question of Missions.

1. *The perpetual obligation to propagate the Christian Faith.*—The [late] Bishop of London understates the case when he says that "missionary work can never cease," because "it must always be the chief desire of those who know the supreme truth about life to pass it on to others." The Christian Church is held to her evangelistic task by no such frail bond as that of an amiable desire to impart truth to others, but by strong and definite links—by the express command-

ment of her Divine Founder, by His supreme Example, by the tradition of the Apostles, by the noblest precedents of her history, by the law of her own being; not to propagate the Gospel would be to destroy her *raison d'être*. A Catholic Church which acquiesces in national or political spheres of influence is a contradiction in terms. A Divine Revelation to Mankind which is treated as the private possession of such and such races is already disbelieved. It is impossible to find words impressive enough to state the weight and solemnity of the evangelistic obligation which attaches to discipleship.

2. *The traditional Christian theology is largely obsolete.*—We can measure the extent of the destruction effected in the theological domain by contrasting the dominant notions of the seventeenth century, when our oldest Missionary Society came into existence, with those which hold sway in the intellectual world which we know. Mediævalism governed religious thought well into this century, and in that age it was supreme. Take the widest-minded Christians of the time—Jeremy Taylor and Richard Baxter for example, the rival glories of Anglicanism and Nonconformity, and abundantly suspected by both of excessive liberality of thought—and try to read their voluminous works. So long as you read as an historian, or a biographer, or a student of manners, or a littérateur, there is much to interest and even fascinate you; but take them as serious religious compositions with which your own mind and conscience are to accord, and you are offended at every turn. The moral atmosphere is altogether different. Appeals which strike us as futile and even offensive, then struck terror into religious men, and moved them to great efforts of self-sacrifice. Old Fuller, in that most quaint and charming of moral treatises, *The Holy and Profane State*, has described a "faithful minister" in his sketch of William Perkins, whose life was just conterminous with the reign of Elizabeth, but whose example was the recognised pastoral model of the Puritan clergy of the seventeenth century. "He would pronounce the word *damn* with such an emphasis as left a doleful echo in his auditors' ears a good while after; and when catechist of Christ College, in expounding the Commandments, applied them so home, able also to make his hearers' hearts fall down, and hairs to stand upright."

Jeremy Taylor's *Contemplations of the State of Man*, published posthumously, is one of the most nauseous exercises of perverted religious rhetoric in the language. It may be matched by Baxter's chapters on the "unconceivable misery of the ungodly" in the third part of his famous *Saints' Everlasting Rest.* These good men, the salt of their age, were hide-bound by the most childish superstition. The Devil haunted their minds, vexed their bodies, thwarted their work, and reigned without a rival over most part of their world. Paganism was his creation, and Popery his *chef d'œuvre.* Sectaries were his peculiar representatives. It is evident that the missionary motive lay on the surface of such a devil-ridden conception of Christianity and the world. "Cruelty and unmercifulness to men's bodies is a most damnable sin, but to their souls much more, as the soul is of greater worth than the body, and as eternity is of greater moment than this short time. Alas! you do not see or feel what case their souls are in, when they are in hell, for want of your faithful admonition. . . . Oh, sirs, how many souls, then, have every one of us been guilty of damning! What a number of our neighbours and acquaintance are dead, in whom we discerned no signs of sanctification, and we never did once plainly tell them of it, or how to be recovered! If you had been the cause but of burning a man's house through your negligence, or of undoing him in the world, or of destroying his body, how would it trouble you as long as you lived! If you had but killed a man unadvisedly, it would much disquiet you. We have known those that have been guilty of murder, that could never sleep quietly after, nor have one comfortable day, their own consciences did so vex and torment them. Oh, then, what a heart mayest thou have, that hast been guilty of murdering such a multitude of precious souls! Remember this when thou lookest thy friend or carnal neighbour in the face, and think with thyself, 'Can I find in my heart, through my silence and negligence, to be guilty of his everlasting burning in hell?' Methinks such a thought should even untie the tongue of the dumb."

Baxter continues in this strain for pages; it evidently was his favourite mode of appeal, and we know that its success was wonderful. Mediævalism waned before the

Latitudinarian influences of the eighteenth century, but with the Methodist Movement it largely regained authority within the religious sphere, and again, as in the seventeenth century, expressed itself in stimulating Foreign Missions. The nineteenth century, as all the world knows, has shown a curious tendency to revert to Mediævalism, and not less certain is the quickening of missionary zeal. Thus the fact is obscured that the traditional Christian theology, the theology of the Middle Ages, the devil-ridden theology of the seventeenth century and of the Methodist Movement, is properly obsolete; and we do not realise the bearings of the fact that with that theology the historic motive of Missions has expired; that, though the old language of terrific urgency is still current among us, it wakes no response in our minds, not because we are less charitable, sincere, and unselfish than our fathers, but because their unconscious assumptions and deliberate convictions are not ours. We no longer really believe the appalling doctrines which fill our theology, endanger our creeds, and linger in our liturgy. Even a pillar of Mediævalism like Dr. Pusey could not escape the contagion of modern thought. In that curious book, *What is of faith as to everlasting Punishment*, he marshals the opinions of the Fathers with his usual care and deference, declares his own belief in their materialised doctrine of a literal fire reserved for lost souls, and expresses his disapproval of modern indifference on the whole subject of future punishment; but he manifestly shrinks from the awful implications of the theory he defends, and his statement, exactly considered, is scarcely less generous than that of Dr. Farrar, which he so severely denounced. It is certain that the average Christian of the educated classes is under no anxiety whatever as to the future fate of the heathen. His apathy or indolence may possibly defraud a certain number of individuals of the consolations of Christianity during this life, but cannot possibly alter their eternal destiny. That is determined by the Paternal Wisdom of the Almighty, who judges all men justly. The conventional phraseology of missionary hymns and appeals is accepted without criticism, but certainly without serious meaning. The frightful conviction that daily, hourly myriads were passing to everlasting flames, which hung like a pall over the minds of our religious

ancestors and was a goad for ever pricking their consciences, and urging them to evangelise at all hazards, to use any and every means to rescue the perishing, is happily dead; and we have to face the obligation to propagate Christianity without the motive which inspired the Missions of the past.

3. *Coercion is no longer admissible as a missionary method.*—I do not suppose that this proposition would be disputed by any modern Christian, although it runs counter to the formal belief of the Roman Catholic Church, and contradicts the habitual policy of almost all Mission Societies. Of course coercion in its cruder forms is unanimously repudiated, but this repudiation is to some extent discounted by the fact that under the normal conditions of their work, missionaries are destitute of any power to bring physical pressure to bear on their auditors. Coercion, however, in subtler forms can never be altogether absent from the evangelistic efforts of superiors among inferiors; there are many inducements indistinguishable in essence from bribery which can be, and often are, brought into the missionary's appeal—and, generally, coercion of consciences is still, what it always has been, the bane of Missions. There is, however, another aspect to religious coercion. Any candid study of Christian History will demonstrate that the most effectual missionary method of the Church has been physical force. The familiar contrast between Christianity and Mohammedanism in respect of the means employed in their diffusion cannot be sustained at the bar of historic fact. Both religions have freely used the sword as an argument; and, to be quite just, I cannot find in the record of Islam any adequate parallel to that murderous machinery of organised coercion, the Inquisition, which, not for one brief interval, but for more than five centuries, represented the ecclesiastical notion of evangelistic method. Of course, I know that while the use of the sword in conversion is approved in principle by Mahomet and commended by his practice, such use is abominable to the spirit of the Gospel, and flat contrary to the example of Christ. It is not in my design to advance an argument against either religion, but only to point out that the modern Church, in agreeing to repudiate coercion, renounces the use of the most effectual missionary method known to her own experience. Where, as

in India and Africa, the two religions coexist as rivals, the success of the inferior faith in making converts is conspicuously greater; and in the latter country at least, it is the sword that turns the scale.

To recapitulate, for the sake of lucidity, I postulate three fixed points in the discussion of the missionary problem—

1. The perpetual obligation to propagate the Christian Faith.

2. That the traditional Christian theology is largely obsolete.

3. That coercion is no longer admissible as a missionary method.

I shall now proceed to set out shortly the case against modern Missions; and then I shall state the reasons which seem to me to justify them. I shall conclude by venturing to draw some tentative conclusions.

The indictment of the missionaries appears to consist of four principal counts. It is affirmed (1) that they preach a Gospel which is no longer held to be true by the best Christian intelligence; (2) that they unwarrantably and unnecessarily insult the religious sentiments of Orientals, and violate their social customs; (3) that they commonly have recourse to political pressure as an auxiliary to their evangelistic efforts; and (4) that they establish nothing competent to take the place of what they destroy, or, to put the same thing in other words, their success is too doubtful in quality and too insignificant in extent, to justify the disturbances and sufferings caused by their labours. These contentions must be briefly examined.

1. It is difficult to deny that there is a grave discrepancy between the Christianity of the educated Englishman and that which is represented by many of our missionaries. It would be worth the while of any serious student of the subject of Missions to make a comparison between the assumptions of missionary literature and those of the best theological discussion at the present time. As a good example of the former, I will take a book written by a very distinguished and popular American preacher, which has already passed through several editions; I mean Dr. Arthur T. Pierson's Duff Lectures for 1893, published under the suggestive title, *The New Acts of*

the Apostles, or the Marvels of Modern Missions. It may be well to recall the fact that Dr. Pierson was for a brief space Mr. Spurgeon's successor at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The book is garnished with a large map, designed to show the "prevailing religions of the world, and the progress of evangelisation." The religious professions of mankind are shown by colours, and the numerical proportions of the different religions by a triangle, representing 1,500,000,000, the whole population of the globe, and divided into appropriately coloured sections. Heathen, pagans, Mohammedans, Roman Catholics, "Greek and Oriental" Christians, and Jews form the non-evangelised mass, the Protestants appear as the monopolists of genuine Christianity, and within the multitude of 150,000,000 is marked a core of 40,000,000 Church members. Mission centres are shown on the map by golden stars, which are scattered impartially through Roman Catholic and non-Christian countries. Continually the writer associates Roman Catholics with non-believers in the most offensive fashion. It will astonish most people to hear that the year 1858 "is probably the most wonderful year in the annals of history, for the rapidity with which on every side new doors opened for access commercially, politically, and religiously to the whole world." Missionaries, it appears, in that year were able to begin operations in Japan, China, *Italy*, *Mexico*, and *France*. This assumption that the largest Church in Christendom is spiritually on a level with the unmitigated heathen penetrates the whole book. It is no excessive inference that the vast multitudes who in England and America admire Dr. Pierson, hang on his words, and devour his writings, share his views. I need not point out that no cultivated Englishman, outside the coteries of fanaticism, makes this assumption, so dishonourable to Christianity and in itself so monstrous, that Papists are as pagans. The distinction is grave in itself, but far graver in what it implies. Once more, Dr. Pierson explicitly affirms views of prayer, of particular providences, of miracles and judgments, which are frankly and literally mediæval, and which certainly are not included in the theology of cultivated Englishmen. As to prayer, one example of its efficacy is so impressive that I cannot refrain from quoting it—

"The repeal of the 'Contagious Diseases' Act in Britain

was a triumph of prayer. Against the advocates of this repeal almost the whole strength of the two Houses of Parliament was massed, but throughout the kingdom disciples were giving themselves to supplication. A few men undertook to maintain a stand against the whole nation, and two or three godly women took their stand beside them, hooted at by an insulting rabble, and pelted by the daily press with merciless ridicule as the 'howling sisterhood!' But prayer prevailed, and the abhorrent measure was abolished by unanimous vote" (p. 358).

I do not exaggerate when I say that the atmosphere of this book is miraculous in the same way as that of the journals of Fox and Wesley. There is the same apparent unconsciousness of the formidable moral implications of the providences so complacently related. One example must suffice—

"In connection with Pentecost at Hilo and Puna (in Hawaii, 1836–1841), there was a miracle of judgment that will never be forgotten. In a secluded valley of Puna was one small village which was a moral cesspool. Awful as was the heathenism about it, here it was worse, and the labours of Mr. Coan, so rapidly fruitful elsewhere, here for years were vain and even worse than vain, for the people hardened themselves against God, and even sought to starve out His messengers. At one time Mr. Coan, with a little band of native Kanakas, went there to hold a meeting, and were refused even a half potato; and at night lay down unable to sleep for hunger. While the villagers thought them asleep, they were seen eating the food which they had denied that they were able to supply for the Lord's servants. In the morning the missionary left them, literally shaking off the dust of his feet for a testimony against them, saying, 'Never again will I come to you until you call for me.' Not long after, this village, though forty miles from port, where the infection was usually caught, was so visited by a scourge of smallpox, that, save three or four survivors, every inhabitant died; and in 1840 a lava flood swept over the site of the previous visitation of God, and left only a black field of death and desolation behind it. It is to this day a reminder of the destruction that overtook Sodom! The people saw in it God's strange work of judgment and retribution" (p. 321).

I have read mediæval biographies, and there is really nothing to choose between their conception of the Divine Character and methods and that of those who endorse and admire such puerilities as this. One more contrast, and I have done with Dr. Pierson. The attitude of mind revealed by his references to non-Christian religions is in striking contrast with that which is commonly expressed in our best literature. He asserts that we are only now beginning to discover "the countless nameless enormities and cruelties that have made the places where paganism dwells the habitations of demons." "Now," he says, "we know the horrors and abominations of pagan, papal, heathen, and Moslem lands —the awful superstitions and degrading rites that even 'the light of Asia' leaves undispelled."

"Near Mauch Chunk, in Pennsylvania, is a burning mine at Summit Hill. For thirty-five years every effort made to quench it has failed, and at a thousand points steam and gas escape; vegetation is gone, and the rocks are so hot as to blister the hand at the touch. That burning mountain is the awful symbol of heathenism. The unquenched fires have burned for ages" (p. 406).

It is undoubtedly true that a great change has passed over popular opinion since the time when Voltaire in France and Goldsmith in England selected the Chinese as examples of benevolent tolerance and sweet religious reasonableness; but that certainly does not indicate a more hostile attitude towards the non-Christian religions. It is only part of the great and most salutary transition from the artificiality and sentimentalism of the age which idolised Rousseau to the reality and robustness of the age which has sat at the feet of Darwin and Mommsen. The great Religions of Asia are known to us now in the translations of their sacred books and in the learned writings of Oriental scholars; and the social order which they have inspired and modelled, and which they colour and cement, has been familiar to thousands of intelligent Europeans, mainly English, who, whether as merchants or travellers or administrators, have lived many years in the East. This country is full of retired Indian officials, there are always many such spending their leave here, scarcely a family of the upper and upper-middle classes

does not count among its members some of these; the commercial intercourse between England and the East has created European communities in every Oriental port, and greatly extended knowledge of the actual working of the "heathen" faiths. Nothing is more certain than that the prevailing character of all this mass of testimony is distinctly favourable. Personally, I never miss an opportunity of inquiring of returned Anglo-Orientals how they were themselves impressed by the actual life of the Eastern peoples. Were they, as a matter of fact, sunken in habitual cruelty, lust, gloom of frightful superstition? The grossest follies in formal belief and in religious practice are less worth considering, as evidences of the real value of any faith, than its actual working in normal life. Certainly no Christian can afford to insist on the first test: can any Christian without misgiving appeal to the last? It is only some sixty years since those excellent Lazarist Fathers, Huc and Gabet, found their names on the Index Expurgatorius for pointing out the curiously close resemblance which Lamaism bore to the system of their own Church. The question is whether, placing side by side the normal life of our European communities and that of the Oriental peoples, there is so manifest a superiority in the former as to justify our hostility to the latter. Let any impartial man consider the facts, and he will find the task of decision extraordinarily difficult.

Certainly the abusive language of Dr. Pierson stands in impressive contrast to the reverent regard expressed for Oriental Religion by the great Anglican divines. I will but mention one name, revered equally as that of an eminent Christian philosopher and an eloquent advocate of Christian Missions. How does Bishop Westcott describe those non-Christian faiths which Dr. Pierson and the vast religious constituency he represents insult so coarsely? In a volume, published in 1892, *The Gospel of Life: Thoughts introductory to the Study of Christian Doctrine*, his Lordship has briefly sketched the religions of the heathen world. It will suffice for my present purpose to quote briefly from his account of the religions of China. He begins by considering the primitive religion which Confucius and Lao-tzŭ found in possession, and largely left untouched. "All that is, properly

speaking, theological in the national Chinese religion is older than their teaching; and this primitive, præ-Taouist, præ-Confucian religion, which survives to the present time in great national ceremonies and in domestic worship, offers many points of the greatest interest" (p. 125).

"The Chinese are commonly held to be a prosaic people. They have at least preserved in these national customs a vivid expression of the most far-reaching fellowship of men in the present and through all time. In the one the nation is gathered up and finds unity in its head, and so appears before its unseen Lord; in the other the family is realised as one through all the stages of succession, and few thoughts are grander than that which holds that the achievements of a great man extend the privileges of his nobility to his ancestors (comp. Luke i. 72). It is no doubt true that the practical effects of these venerable observances fall far below their true conception. The text of the imperial prayers is not accessible. The solemnities of ancestral worship degenerate into forms. Still the institutions themselves have a meaning for us. They come to us as a message from a patriarchal age, declaring what man reaches out to and what by himself he cannot obtain. As we look on them with true human sympathy, we seem to see a dim shadow of Melchizedek moving among his people" (pp. 128, 129).

Even of Taouism, "the most debased type" of Chinese religion, the Bishop speaks kindly, noting the "moral aphorisms of great beauty" contained in *The Book of Rewards and Punishments*, which is said to be the most popular religious book in China. Confucianism is more venerable in itself, and more powerful in its influence.

"The history of China is the best comment on the strength and on the weakness of this most wonderful system of secularism leavened by the remains of a patriarchal faith. The Empire has been at once the most lasting in the world and the most unprogressive. It has been lasting, because it was the resolute expression of faith in a supreme and beneficent order, as against the pessimism of Hinduism and Buddhism, which sees in the world of sense illusion and evil, and the endless conflict of popular Zoroastrianism. It has been unprogressive, because Confucianism obscured the fact of

sin, and substituted a morality for a theology, rules for a Divine fellowship, obedience to a code for devotion to a living Lord, teaching for a Teacher,—as many at the present day seem to believe that the Sermon on the Mount can take the place of the Risen Christ,—and adopted a type of order which was earthly and human, of the world and not above it. In China we see realised the effects of an absolute law, obeyed apart from reference to an absolute Lawgiver, of a personal moral discipline ruled by the motive of self-regarding culture and not of self-sacrifice. China has been able to conquer its conquerors, but not to inspire them ; to make them like itself, but not to call out the fulness of their life. The Chinese became what we may suppose the Jews would have become if the covenant with Abraham had not underlain the law" (p. 139).

The Bishop concludes with this significant sentence: "Thus the characteristic conceptions of China become a great prophecy, and bear witness to a hope which will not for ever be unsatisfied" (p. 142).

The missionaries, inspired by such a just and sympathetic view of the Oriental faiths, are not likely to adopt the same evangelistic methods as those which commend themselves to zealots of the Dr. Pierson type.

I am not, of course, unconscious that at this moment, when the Press daily reports abominable outrages from China, I cannot count on a very sympathetic reception of the notion that there is no such substantial inferiority in the Eastern society as to authorise the furious abuse of the non-Christian religions in which Dr. Pierson and his following indulge. But I would venture to suggest that the Chinese massacres are no more trustworthy witnesses to Chinese Religion than the Bartholomew Massacre, or the Lord George Gordon riots, or the Anti-Semite atrocities are to Christianity. We ought not to lose sight of the curiously suggestive fact, that the Russian soldiers *en route* for China to join in the Kaiser's Crusade of Christendom against the Yellow Fiend, paused on their way to sack the Jewish quarter of Odessa, and, as far as they could, to massacre its harmless and unarmed inhabitants.

2. It is affirmed that the missionaries, inspired by the

contemptuous view of "heathen" religions which I have described, do provoke the Orientals by unwarrantably and unnecessarily insulting their religious sentiments and immemorial social customs. Here it is not altogether easy to come to a decision, for the facts are challenged; but at least it must be conceded that there is much probability that the behaviour of the missionaries abroad will not belie the theories they profess at home; and, in any case, it cannot be supposed that they will exhibit a larger respect for the beliefs and prejudices of the heathen than they are wont to exhibit for those of their fellow-Christians. We are not driven to doubtful rumour for information as to the evangelistic methods which are adopted in China and India. We can see them in use daily before our eyes. The followers of a Kensit or a Fillingham think it not only permissible, but praiseworthy, to press their peculiar views by profaning Public Worship, mutilating sepulchral monuments, and even insulting the Consecrated Wafer. If these men found themselves rebuked by the general censure, we might dismiss their abominable conduct as the extravagance of individuals; but when we observe them condoned, and more than condoned, by the mass of "Protestants," when we take note of the absence of condemnation from any source save their victims, we are compelled to infer that the general conscience is not seriously offended by such outrages on reverence and charity. Will more respect be shown to the "superstitions" and "idolatries" of Islam, Buddha, Confucius, and the Brahmans than we see to be shown to those of "Ritualists" and "Papists"? Is the Salvation Army more considerate in the Tropics than in the Temperate Zone? Are the Plymouth Brethren more reasonable and less arrogant? If so large acceptance is extended to the accusations against missionaries, I apprehend the explanation may in part be found in the actual facts of English religion. From what we see and know to happen in England, we infer what will probably happen in China or India, when the same fanaticism is set at work there. Is it an unnatural or an unreasonable inference?

3. The charge that missionaries commonly have recourse to political pressure as an auxiliary to their evangelistic efforts, is practically admitted. On 7th September no less than

four hundred missionaries, representing twenty societies, assembled in conference at Shanghai, and adopted resolutions "appealing to the home Governments to secure an adequate and permanent settlement of the present crisis." The missionaries, according to the *Times*' report, agreed on the following resolutions:—(1) The restoration of the Emperor to full power; (2) guarantees that China will hereafter fulfil her treaty obligations towards Missions; (3) that official protection be extended to native law-abiding Christians, who should be exempted from the observance of the customs of any religion other than their own; (4) the prompt and adequate punishment of all official instigators of outrages, from the Empress downward; (5) that a proclamation embodying the terms of the settlement be posted for two years throughout the Empire (*Times*, Sept. 11, 1900). If these resolutions were adopted by the Powers, and missionary enterprise were to proceed on that basis, who could blame the Chinaman who henceforward regarded the missionaries as the agents of foreign aggression? And is it not mere playing with words to deny that these missionaries are anxious to force the Chinese by political pressure, backed up by armed intervention, to grant them facilities for their work? And how is such coercion separable in essence from that exercised in the mediæval conversions? And how can either be reconciled with the Divine Saviour's declaration that His kingdom is not of this world? It is to be noted that, while some missionaries repudiate, so far as they themselves are concerned, the accusation of resorting to political pressure, yet they admit the charge with respect to other missionaries. Thus the Church Missionary Society's Report for 1899–1900 accuses the Roman Catholics—

"The anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiment finds some palliation and excuse for its existence, alas! in the arbitrary acts of interference with native tribunals, and in the exercise of political influence to serve the interests of a religious propaganda, on the part of Roman Catholic Missions in various parts of China. A flagrant instance of the former was the subject of correspondence in the columns of the *North China Daily News* between Bishop Moule and Bishop Reynaud, the latter being Vicaire Apostolique and head of the Lazarist Mission in Cheh-Kiang."

After narrating the episode, which was sufficiently scandalous, the Report proceeds—

"It is in complete accord with the spirit which underlies such transactions as the one above adverted to, that it has been claimed on behalf of Roman Catholic missionaries labouring in China that a definite rank should be accorded to them, corresponding to that of the higher officials of the Government. A bishop, for instance, is to rank as a Viceroy, and a priest with a magistrate, etc. It was understood that the Chinese Government anticipated that the same privileges (if they can be so termed) would be claimed under the Most Favoured Nation clause by Protestant missionaries from the various Western lands, and that it would have welcomed and gladly responded to applications for similar recognition. The Bishops of the Anglican Communion, however, who met at Shanghai, under the presidency of Bishop Moule, in October 1899, unanimously agreed that it was not desirable to demand any such status, and the Protestant missionaries throughout the empire have, with almost equal unanimity, determined on a like course" (pp. 360, 361).

I have little doubt that the Roman Catholics would not be slow to urge similar accusations against their rivals. It is not, however, necessary to labour a point which is already established.

4. Lastly, it is urged against the missionaries that the results of their work are trivial, or unsatisfactory, or both; that they establish nothing competent to take the place of what they destroy; that, in short, their success is not sufficient to justify the disturbances and sufferings caused by their labours. I confess that this accusation weighs less with me than the rest. Not only is the evidence very conflicting, but the nature of the objection seems a little obscure. It has already been laid down as a fixed point in the discussion, that the obligation of Missions is perpetual. This objection really lies against Missions as such, and therefore raises issues which lie beyond the range of this article. Moreover, even if it were otherwise, history warns us to be very careful against undervaluing the discipleship of new converts. We forget the immense periods required for the evolution of the very unsatisfactory Christianity of modern Europe; we must not be

too hasty to determine the worth of missionary work by the quality of the converts. The real worth lies in their potentialities, and *they* are as yet necessarily unknown.

Such, then, I conceive to be the case against Missions. What can be said by way of answer? In what I shall here say, I desire to be understood to be setting out the broad considerations which reconcile me to the conclusion that the balance inclines on the side of the missionaries. I have no claim to defend the policy of the Societies; nor am I competent to frame an apology for Christian Missions. It must suffice that I indicate briefly my own position.

1. Aggressive Christianity has never represented the highest theological standard. Zeal is always narrowing, and always will be. You must take what you can get. Courage will rarely go with wisdom; and charity hardly ever with zeal. These men, whose crude theology makes me shudder, and whose manner of work makes me angry, are inspired by an apostolic spirit; they live hard lives and die heroic deaths: what would you have more? That is their Gospel, not the poor stuff they talk.

2. Christian history suggests that the worst missionary methods are unable to injure permanently the Christianity they establish. The Christianity forced on the Saxons at sword's point does not seem perceptibly inferior to that laboriously preached by unarmed evangelists. A few generations suffice to heal the wounds, and, in the sequel, the work stands. S. Paul's magnanimous attitude towards the Judaising preachers may well suggest to us a standpoint from which to regard modern Missions with equanimity. "Some, indeed, preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of goodwill: the one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel; but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds. What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

3. Since it is inevitable that Oriental feelings should be insulted by the contact with Western civilisation, I would rather have the insult accompanied by some positive religious teaching. The disintegration of the non-Christian religions,

as a consequence of intercourse with Europeans, is witnessed to by all students of Oriental society, and is, indeed, obviously probable in itself. I dread the results of this process. I think the missionaries, though they themselves contribute to it, yet do in some measure mitigate the injury which Europe inflicts on Asia. They represent the highest element of European culture, and offer some substitute for the religious conviction which is undermined and swept away by European science and philosophy.

4. I think that the history of modern Missions has demonstrated the truly remarkable fact, that Christianity is capable of satisfying the religious requirements of the whole human race. Mr. Eliot Howard does not seem to me to overstate the case when, in his interesting *Studies of Non-Christian Religions*, he thus expresses his own conclusions:—

"I desire to speak with all due caution and judgment, for I have had fair opportunity of knowing something of the failures and disappointments as well as of the successes in the work of Missions. But allowing fully for every form of discouragement, I have no hesitation in saying that the Negro, the Maori, the Fuegian, the South Sea Islander, the North American Indian, the Chinaman, and other pagans, show that the message is just as well suited for them as it was for the Briton or the Saxon."

5. I think that missionary enterprise reacts wholesomely on society at home. It is something that in this base time, when every sphere of the national life is infected with the vulgarest Mammon-worship, and the Church herself is tied and bound by the prevailing commercialism, there should be continually renewing itself before men's eyes this stern pageant of self-surrender. All their blunders sink into nothingness by comparison with this great Service to Humanity which these missionaries render. Assuredly, in this sense at least, they perpetuate the witness and affirm the protest of Calvary—"Right dear in the sight of the Lord is *the death* of His saints."

6. I think that however questionable the worth of missionary work may be in ancient civilised communities possessed of developed religious systems, such as the Chinese and Hindoo, there can be no possible doubt that among savage and un-

civilised peoples missionary work is an unmitigated blessing. I shudder to think of Imperial expansion being suffered to proceed without the oversight and restraint of these "watch-dogs of Christ," who stand between the native races in their helplessness and the rapacity of adventurers.

7. I think that, in face of the new conceptions of the universe, of man, of duty, which modern science suggests, and which modern philosophies elaborate, in face of the conditions under which human life must henceforward proceed, the only form of Theism which has any chance of holding its own is the Christian, and that the only ethical ideal which can satisfy and enkindle men is enshrined in the New Testament. It is that or nothing in the long run. Christianity, however restated and metamorphosed in creed and system,—the conception of God and duty which inspired the life of Christ,—or, for the most part of men, blank, bestial materialism. I cannot see any real hope of survival in any other religion of which I know anything.

For obvious reasons, I have thrown the case for Missions into the form of a personal profession. It remains that I should set down a few tentative conclusions which the study of the missionary problem seems to suggest. I shall state them nakedly without comment—

1. That a serious and sustained effort should be made to get rid of Dr. Pierson's attitude towards the whole subject, and to substitute that of Bishop Westcott. I use the names as conveniently carrying my meaning. Both writers are eminently representative.

2. That preaching in the bazaars be generally, if not universally, abandoned.

3. That the principal efforts of Oriental missionaries be centred in medical and educational work.

4. That careful consideration be given to the point how far the conversion of individuals can be reconciled with the attempt to reform and perpetuate the native customs. The parallel course of politics illustrates my meaning. It is being recognised that annexation and direct government are not the wisest policy. To reform, strengthen, supervise, and perpetuate the native dynasties seems to be the preferable course. The analogy is helpful up to a point.

5. That the largest latitude of ecclesiastical adaptation consistent with loyalty to Christian principles be conceded.

6. That an honest effort be made to sever the fortunes of missionaries from those of other Europeans, and to base on their hardships and wrongs no political claims.

7. That some agreement be effected between missionary agencies so as to terminate the present mischiefs arising from overlapping of spheres and competitive proselytising.

THE MIVART EPISODE

[*June* 1900]

THERE is a generous reluctance among cultivated Englishmen to credit the accusations urged against the Church of Rome. It is not wonderful that this should be so. Protestant brutality has left on the national record many dark stains, which we still blush to remember, and the "No Popery" fanatics of our own time impress us as combining the worst passions of religion with the most debased methods of politics. The Roman Church, as most Englishmen see it, lies outside the range of personal experience. It is represented on the one hand by a small company of cultured and amiable persons belonging to the higher ranks of society, on the other hand by the ever-charming Irish. The spiritual fame of Cardinal Newman and his fellow-converts of the Tractarian Epoch still lingers in the popular memory. The High Church party in the National Church, which certainly includes a large proportion of the more refined and socially considerable Anglicans, resolutely refuses to give credence to anything which may compromise in the public judgment that "Catholicism' to which it clings with a devotion at once so ardent and so unintelligent. The prejudices of Low Churchmen, when Rome is in question, are so violent and so obvious, that no serious attention is likely to be paid by thoughtful men to anything from their camp; while, of course, on this subject the Nonconformists simply don't count. The strategic advantages of the Roman Church in England are thus very great, and if the Roman authorities were capable of using them, there is hardly any limit to the successes which they might achieve. Unfortunately for the Roman Church, judicial blindness seems to have fallen upon its leaders, and displays of cynical wickedness in every part of the Roman sphere

of activity are forcing the most lethargic and reluctant Englishmen to reconsider the kindly scepticism with which they have, as a matter of course, treated the accusations against the most hated and most famous of Christian Churches. For now the accusers are neither Protestants nor unbelievers, but good Catholics, the salt of their Church; men who have gone beyond their fellows in pressing its claim on the acceptance of modern society; who have earned by the distinction of their character, or the force of their intellect, or the ardour of their philanthropy, the regard of their non-Catholic contemporaries. There is, of course, nothing novel in this. At recurring intervals a domestic crisis manifests itself within the Roman Church, and always takes the same form. A movement of "Liberal Catholicism" enlists the better educated members of the Church in the forlorn hope of reconciling the system, dogmatic and ecclesiastical, of the Vatican with the life of the age. The enterprise is endured, tolerated, even approved, and its champions wax hopeful and venturesome. They pass from theory to practice, and actually threaten some hierarchical interest; then the blow falls; the machine of Curialism is set in motion, and a sudden and ruthless fate befalls the promising movement of reform. Some—the leaders—are sacrificed, many are silenced. There is sullen acquiescence for a space, and fanatics of all sorts admire the discipline of Rome. "Solitudinem faciunt: pacem appellant." Thirty years ago, and the Old Catholics were driven from the Roman pale. They were the best, not the worst Churchmen of their time. Ignatius von Döllinger died excommunicate, but none the less for that fact, the most respected ecclesiastic in Germany. Montalembert, dying at the crisis of the movement, was ostentatiously insulted by Pius IX., in spite of his chivalrous devotion to the Papacy, and his unquestionable supremacy among French lay-Catholics. Thirty years before that, and a still greater man than either Döllinger or Montalembert was brutally repudiated by the Vatican—Lamennais.

The present situation, therefore, is, in a sense, normal; once more the short term of Roman patience has expired, and the blow has fallen on the latest Liberal Catholic movement. There are, however, certain circumstances which give

special gravity to the present crisis. Public opinion is to-day a much more formidable force than at any previous period; it is largely international, and it has secured greatly improved means of expression. Moreover, it represents a vastly more numerous constituency, and is much more exacting. Then, the domestic crisis of the Roman Church has, on this occasion, linked itself with a portentous public scandal in France—l'Affaire Dreyfus, and a great national crisis in England—the South African War. The same kind of resentment, though on an immensely more extended arena, has been provoked against Romanism as was provoked in the last century by the Calas tragedy, and other abominations of which that was the climax. It can hardly be doubted that the labours of the Encyclopædists in fastening on the Church not only the reputation of intellectual obscurantism, but also the darker stigma of moral debasement, was no mean factor in the sum of causes which produced the French Revolution. That Religion should not harmonise with science does not greatly distress the multitude; only the few, who think and know, suffer under the strain of intellectual confusion; but when Religion is seen to be plainly at cross purposes with morality, then the area of disturbance is indefinitely increased; the general conscience repudiates as monstrous a Church, professedly Christian, which violates the first principles of Christianity, and a temper of stern and even relentless antagonism spreads rapidly among the people.

It is this sinister combination of intellectual revolt and moral protest which is the characteristic of religious revolutions. Alike in the sixteenth century and in the eighteenth, the Church fell before a twofold attack. The reason of the few and the conscience of the many brought to ruin the ecclesiastical system which had outraged both. And this seems to me the formidable feature of the present situation. Roman Christianity is challenged both by the modern intellect and by the general conscience, and it is condemned by both. The excommunication of Dr. St. George Mivart illustrates the first, the exposure of "Monastic Orders up to date" illustrates the second. It is the combination of the two which threatens consequences of far-reaching and formidable character primarily to the Roman Church, and

then to that Religion which the Roman Church has so disastrously discredited. In this article I propose to consider briefly the first of these suggestive occurrences.

Let me point out that on several grounds the excommunication of Dr. St. George Mivart must be reckoned an event of no mean importance. The Roman Church, as we all know, is actively aggressive, and, according to its own account, wonderfully successful. A widely-circulated volume categorically states that "the number of converts in England now amounts to nearly 10,000 per annum,"[1] and statements scarcely less extravagant have been made by various Roman ecclesiastics. These statements have been publicly and constantly challenged, and never substantiated; they are referred to here only as indicating the current Roman attitude. There is, however, another process to which the Roman authorities are not commonly willing to direct attention, and about which they are extremely and suggestively reticent. Proselytes are coming in, but members are going out; "conversion" is coincident with "apostasy"; and though from the nature of the case it is little likely that "apostates" will equal or exceed the "converts" in number, it is sufficiently evident that they are superior in quality. In Austria and France the secessions from Rome have been very numerous; and in England, where for obvious reasons the political and moral conditions under which continental "apostasies" multiply, scarcely exist, there have been of recent years not a few desertions.[2]

The Roman Church is not merely concerned with the petty, not to say squalid, task of seducing individuals, it aims at recovering some of the lost ground in spheres from which (to the evident and, outside the Roman Church, universally admitted gain of mankind) its influence has been driven. The proposal to create a "Catholic" University in Ireland has obtained much favour in political circles. It is advocated with chivalrous ardour by Mr. Balfour, it is approved by

[1] *Converts to Rome*, by W. Gordon Gorman, 4th edition. [Swan Sonnenschein, 1899.]

[2] On this subject reference may be made to the remarkable article, "A Liberal Catholic View of the Case of Dr. Mivart," by R. E. Dell (*Nineteenth Century*, April 1900), and to the articles by Mr. Bagot and Mr. Arthur Galton in the *National Review*, May 1900.

the distinguished representatives of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin; it appeals easily to the general desire to do justice to Ireland; it is commended to the acceptance of cultivated men, contemptuous (and justly) of merely sectarian jealousies, by the indecent and inconsistent attitude of the Radical Nonconformists. It seems reasonable to suppose that within a few years at furthest Mr. Balfour will have converted his followers, and persuaded Parliament to establish, at great cost to this country, ecclesiastical supremacy in an Irish State University. Without attempting here to discuss this policy, and admitting frankly the extreme reluctance with which an impartial man, desiring to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of Ireland on the one hand, and to preserve inviolate the conditions of sound learning in the State Universities on the other, would offer it any opposition, it may be fairly pleaded that the probable tendency and effect of Roman control ought to be very carefully considered before the Nation, which, at great cost to many venerable and beneficent interests, and doing outrage to much that was lofty and traditional, has banished ecclesiastical control in its mild Anglican form from the English Universities, goes back on its steps, and establishes ecclesiastical control of the virulent Roman type in an Irish University. There are higher interests than those of nationality, and political duty is not well expressed by general phrases about justice and generosity; nor may legitimate disgust at bigotry and meanness be accepted as a safe principle for the guidance of statesmen. The supreme consideration in organising a University ought to be the interest of sound learning; and if the ignorance of the Irish people and the narrowness of the Roman hierarchy demand something which is not consistent with that interest, it would seem the high duty of Parliament to protect them from the consequences of their own folly. The case of Dr. Mivart has happened very opportunely, and those who are seriously contemplating the free gift to the Roman Church of control over the higher education of Ireland, should seriously consider the light which it casts on the crucial question, whether or not there is a reasonable probability that the Roman Church would use that control to the intellectual injury of the Irish people. The death of Dr. St. George Mivart

has added a tragic touch to the episodes of his protest and excommunication. It has also solemnly authenticated the plea which he had himself advanced as the justification for action which, it must be admitted, required justification. On 23rd January he wrote to Cardinal Vaughan a long letter, which was subsequently published in the *Times*,[1] in which, after reaffirming his condemned opinions, he went on to explain his public and vehement assertion of them. A pathetic interest attaches to these declarations of one who might be described as a dying man—

"Still when, in two or three years, I had become fully convinced that orthodox Catholicism was untenable, I was extremely disinclined to secede. I was most reluctant to give pain to many dear Catholic friends, some of whom had been very kind to me. My family also was, and is, strongly Catholic, and my secession might inflict not only great pain, but possibly social disadvantage on those nearest and dearest to me.

"Why then, I asked myself, should I not continue to conform, as advocated in my *Fortnightly Review* article? Why should I stultify my past career when approaching its end, and give myself labour and sorrow? It was a great temptation. Probably I should have remained silent had I not, by my writings, influenced many persons in favour of what I now felt to be erroneous, and therefore inevitably more or less hurtful. To such persons I was a debtor. I also hated to disguise, even by reticence, what I held to be truth.

"These considerations were brought to a climax last year by a grave and prolonged illness. I was told I should probably die. Could I go out of the world while still remaining silent? It was plain to me that I ought not, and as soon as I could (in August) I wrote my recently published articles. Therein I felt it would be useless to confine myself to that question which was for me at the root of the whole matter—namely, Scripture. Therefore, while taking care to use no uncertain language about the Bible, I made my articles as startling as I could in other respects, so as to compel attention to them, and elicit, if possible, an unequivocal

[1] 27th January 1900.

pronouncement. In this I have, thank God, succeeded, and the clause about Scripture I am required to sign is for me decisive. . . .

"Happily, I can now speak with entire frankness as to all my convictions. *Liberavi animam meam.* I can sing my *Nunc dimittis* and calmly await the future."

A few weeks after writing these words, Dr. Mivart was dead. The relentless cruelty of that cruel Church, which he had spent a lifetime in defending, pursued him to the end. His corpse was refused admission to consecrated ground, and finally buried without Christian rites. It was a miserable close to a distinguished career, a chapter from the sixteenth century, shall we say? interpolated into the annals of the nineteenth. Of the mingled shame and pathos, the latter belongs wholly to the victim, and the former mainly to the Roman Church. It will be worth while to review the "Mivart episode" before its circumstances have faded from public memory, and to indicate its bearings on certain questions of great and perpetual importance.

Dr. St. George Mivart had for many years served the controversialists of Rome as a demonstration of the compatibility of Vaticanism and modern science; he has now, by an appropriate Nemesis, served to demolish the paradox he has maintained. Rome has for the nonce dropped the pretence of liberalism, and reverted to her historic, natural attitude of unbending obscurantism. The Pontificate of Leo XIII. is closing amid heavy clouds of scandal. The bright hopes which gathered about the accession of an amiable and scholarly Pontiff, the very antithesis of his grotesque predecessor, have turned out, as all similar hopes in the past have invariably turned out, to be mere mocking delusion. In France, where conspicuously the new liberal policy of the Vatican was supposed to be beneficently effective, we have witnessed the unparalleled abominations of *l'Affaire;* in America, where it was affirmed that a new and more generous type of Catholicism had grown up under the influence of democratic institutions and the Anglo-Saxon spirit, we have witnessed the decisive condemnation of Americanism; in England, where the most exalted expectations had been formed, and, by the promotion of the least obscurantist of

English Papal theologians to the Cardinalate, apparently sanctioned, we have now witnessed the excommunication of Dr. St. George Mivart. I have always been amazed at the confidence with which Liberal sympathies have been credited to Pope Leo XIII. He has not been chary of public pronouncements; his sentiments are on record in a remarkable series of official documents, and all indicate a rigid theological conservatism.

It is not, however, of the Pope that I shall here speak, but of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, his principal English delegate, who has placed before the public a profession of faith which deserves the thoughtful consideration of all who are interested in the future of Christianity. But first of his Eminence's victim.

Dr. St. George Mivart explains that he was moved to write the two articles which have secured his expulsion from the Church, by the not unnatural suspicion that the attitude which he had adopted and pressed on others was really indefensible, and in truth dishonest. He had, to use his own words, "become fully convinced that orthodox Catholicism was untenable"; but he was long unwilling to declare his conviction for reasons of which it is easy to conceive the force. He was loth to distress his family, to disturb his disciples, to stultify his apologetics. This natural reluctance, however, was—as we have seen—overcome by the solemn consideration, brought home to him by advancing years and "a grave and prolonged illness," that at all hazards he must be loyal to his own conscience.

It is but just to remember Dr. St. George Mivart's avowed intention. For years he had been speaking and writing about the doctrines of his Church with a liberty which his own conscience demanded, but which his intelligence clearly pronounced to be quite inconsistent with orthodoxy; but his Church made no sign, nay, he found himself even encouraged and applauded by prominent and learned ecclesiastics. He could not protract the farce any longer, and therefore he forced the hand of the Authorities by assuming an attitude of contemptuous dislike towards the fundamental doctrines of the Church. It must be allowed by the most indulgent critic that Dr. St. George

Mivart's tone is very deplorable. No sincere Christian, of whatever denomination, could have read his articles without repugnance. It is not merely, or chiefly, their actual statements, but the atmosphere of barely suppressed ribaldry which pervades them which is so distressing. But in this respect we cannot distinguish between the Doctor and his critics. He with his negations and suggested suspicions, they with their assertions and implied assumptions, meet on a common level of unconscious profanity. It is the product and witness of the Roman casuistry, and it gives to much Roman theology a character equally distinctive and offensive. Sir Walter Scott has observed that the frightful sacrilege which marked the Reformation had its root in the policy of the Mediæval Church, which encouraged profane sports among the populace.

"When times changed—when doubt of the Roman Catholic doctrine, and hatred of their priesthood, had possessed the Reformed party, the clergy discovered, too late, that no small inconvenience arose from the established practice of games and merry-makings, in which they themselves and all they held most sacred were made the subject of ridicule."[1]

In somewhat similar fashion the Roman Church, by its coarseness in popular devotions, its licentious speculations with respect to modes of spiritual action, its materialism and elaborated casuistry, is the responsible author of the lamentable profanity which has commonly marked the antagonists whom it has reared in its own bosom. Voltaire's ribaldry has its springs in the writings of the Jesuit casuists, and Renan's intolerable flippancy is at least in part the effect of the seminary. I do not doubt that this profane tone of Roman Catholic discussions of sacred things is, so far as individuals are concerned, wholly unconscious; but it is matter of constant observation among Anglicans, not otherwise ill-disposed towards the Roman Church, and, I confess, offends me almost beyond any other feature of Roman controversy. In calling attention to this aspect of Dr. St. George Mivart's articles, I disclaim any intention of accusing him of conscious irreverence. He has for many years

[1] *Vid. The Abbot*, chap. xiv.

breathed the atmosphere of Roman theological discussion, and he has caught its tone. Views quite as revolutionary as his need involve no irreverence in statement, as Professor Percy Gardner has recently shown in his remarkable, suggestive, and thoroughly devout *Exploratio Evangelica.*

The grave importance of Dr. St. George Mivart's article on "The Continuity of Catholicism" (*Nineteenth Century,* January 1900) arises, however, less from its declarations of belief or disbelief, than from its categorical statements of fact; for while the former can but compromise the orthodoxy of the author himself, the latter affects most seriously the reputation of his Church. It has often been asserted by the opponents of Vaticanism, that the system purchases the imposing spectacle of dogmatic unity by conniving at extensive domestic scepticism. Superstition and unbelief—the one official, manifest, and coercive; the other private, secret, and voluntary—have been often declared to be the twin marks of the Roman Church. Dr. St. George Mivart, after fifty-six years of membership in that Church, turns "Queen's Evidence," and confirms the accusation most convincingly. He is well qualified for the task, for he has for many years been accepted as the leader and spokesman of the advanced section of Liberal Roman Catholics, and the credit of his name has been freely used by the proselytising agents of the Roman Church. He claims no more than his due, when he describes himself as "one highly interested in all that concerns Catholicity, who has had certain advantages and opportunities for observation which those who are external to Catholicism cannot possess." Speaking, then, with the authority of personal knowledge, Dr. St. George Mivart assures us that the Roman Church is riddled with unbelief. Even "the most rigid Roman theologians" have abandoned the formal creed of the Church with respect to some or other of its articles. "Educated Catholics no longer feel bound to regard the Bible in the old light," and this in spite of Œcumenical Councils and Infallible Popes.

"There is probably no well-informed Catholic now in the world" who accepts S. Matthew as an interpreter of prophecy. "Many modern Catholics, as orthodox as learned," have repudiated the doctrine of the Atonement, and regard

Christ's life and death as merely a great "object lesson." In Dr. St. George Mivart's presence "a man devoted to the cause of Catholicity" was assured that "it would be lawful for him, as a Catholic, to worship God as Zeus or Athene, if he was in truth devoutly moved so to adore Him," always provided that he practised his paganism privately. The "learned and devout priest" who gave this amazing assurance was supported by "three other learned and experienced priests" of whom Dr. St. George Mivart "subsequently asked the same question." Another "learned theologian (high in office, and in great favour with the Pope)" assured him that "if it could be proved that Christ's body had rotted in the grave," the truth of the doctrine of the Resurrection would not be in the least affected. The doctrine of Christ's Virgin-birth is as lightly held. "Indeed, to my certain knowledge, there actually are devout Catholics of both sexes, well known and highly esteemed—weekly communicants, and leading lives devoted to charity and religion—who believe Joseph to have been the real and natural father of Jesus." Even priests hold this view; and Dr. St. George Mivart heard "a devout and ascetic religious affirm" "that he thought the extraordinary dignity to which Rome has now raised S. Joseph, may have been providentially brought about in preparation for a great change in popular sentiment and credence on this question." Now all this constitutes an indictment of the Roman Church so grave that the merely personal issue of the writer's orthodoxy counts for little by comparison. Here it may be observed with advantage that Dr. St. George Mivart does not stand alone. He is but the most outspoken and the least judicious of a considerable band of discontented Roman Catholics, who have chafed against the dominion of the Curia, and made such protest as they dared. "Verax" preserves his incognito successfully, but he is evidently a man of ability and influence in the Roman Church. Mr. Richard Bagot continues to write most damaging accounts of the system, to which, I suppose, he is still nominally subject. Mr. R. E. Dell, a very recent convert, has quickly regained the free use of that private judgment which he presumably renounced on his admission to the Roman Communion. Anonymous letters to the *Times* have

indicated a widely-distributed repugnance among Romanist laymen against the brutal methods of the Vatican; and it is notorious that the patriotism of the English Roman Catholics as a whole has risen in revolt against the malignant policy against Great Britain pursued by the wire-pullers of the Curia. In several cases well-known Roman Catholics have retired in incurable disgust from the Church of their ancestors; and it is certain that the folly of the Curia has again re-awakened in an acute and dangerous form the traditional anti-Papalism of the English people.

The Roman authorities have not been altogether unconscious of the situation, and they have met it after their own fashion. The *Tablet* excels itself in virtuous indignation at the baseness of anonymous accusation, apparently not seeing that any other accusation is practically impossible in a society which excommunicates, boycotts, and defames its domestic critics, and that the really weighty testimony, that of Dr. St. George Mivart himself, is not anonymous. The impartial public will certainly prefer the affirmation of a distinguished man of science before the angry denials of anonymous journalists and polemical jesuits. Cardinal Vaughan may technically save the orthodoxy of his Church by excommunicating the too candid heretic, but his evidence is on record, and demonstrates the actual quality of that doctrinal unity which the agents of Vaticanism exalt as the gift of Infallibility and the unique distinction of the true Church.

Early in January, Cardinal Vaughan sent to Dr. St. George Mivart a "profession of Catholic faith," requiring him in harsh and even offensive terms to subscribe it forthwith with his signature. After three monitions to this effect, and without waiting for an answer to the third, the Cardinal addressed to the clergy of the diocese of Westminster notice of Dr. St. George Mivart's excommunication, enumerating his heresies, and adding to his letter the following notable post-script:—

"If it were true, as Dr. Mivart asserts, that there were persons calling themselves Catholics who hold any of the above heresies, it would be necessary to remind them that they have ceased in reality to be Catholics, and that if they

were to approach the sacraments, they would do so sacrilegiously at the peril of their souls, and in defiance of the law of the Church." The "formula" which has been thus authoritatively issued as a statement of essential Christian truth, was published in the *Times* on 22nd January, and merits the careful study of all who have been disposed to accept the assurances of "Liberal Catholics" as to the mind of modern Vaticanism. It is a long document when compared with the Creed of Nicæa, filling rather more than half a column of the *Times*. At best it is a singularly crude version of doctrines which all orthodox Christians, of whatever denomination, would agree to regard as essential; but it has worse features, and includes propositions which no self-respecting man, possessed of any tincture of historical or scientific culture, could accept. It is, unhappily, a normal practice of Roman theologians to bind up together in an indivisible unity fundamental truth and doctrines which, if they be truth at all, are assuredly not fundamental to Christianity. In that way coercion is laid on the Christian understanding, and violence done to the Christian conscience. In dread of repudiating Divine Truth, a reluctant assent is yielded to propositions declared by authority to be inseparable adjuncts of Divine Truth. The list of credenda continually lengthens, but the quality of belief continually degenerates, until, under the imposing aspect of ordered dogmatic conviction, there arises and spreads a spirit of cynical insincerity. The Virgin-birth of Christ is so stated as to be almost intolerable, and it is linked on equal terms with the perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin which, as an article of essential religion, is wholly intolerable; while, to put the coping stone on the fabric of gratuitous offence, it is declared that no modification of these coarsely phrased dogmas can at any future time be consistent with Christianity. But the sting of the Cardinal's formula is in its tail; the two concluding sections are sentence of death on intellectual honesty within the sphere of Roman orthodoxy. They must be quoted in full—

"In accordance with the Holy Councils of Trent and of the Vatican, I receive all the books of the Old and New Testament, with all their parts as set forth in the fourth session of

the Council of Trent, and contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate, as sacred and canonical—not because, having been carefully composed by mere human industry, they were afterwards approved by the Church's authority, nor merely because they contain revelation with no admixture of error; but because, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author, and have been delivered as such to the Church herself. Wherefore, in all matters of faith or morals appertaining to the building up of Christian doctrine, I believe that to be the true sense of Holy Scripture which our Holy Mother the Church has held and now holds, to whom the judgment of the true sense and interpretation of Holy Scripture belongs."[1]

Cardinal Vaughan adopts current official language, and makes it clear enough that no casuistry of interpretation is permissible. The decree of Trent, defining the contents of the Canon of Scripture so as to include the Apocryphal books, and binding on the Church as sacred a version of Scripture which, besides the inevitable disadvantages of a version, was based on a Greek text known to be faulty, is reaffirmed as binding on Christian intelligence in the last year of a century marked, beyond all precedent, by advance in the science of Biblical criticism. Bishop Westcott's comment on this decree is worth recalling—

"This fatal decree, in which the Council, harassed by the fear of lay critics and 'grammarians,' gave a new aspect to the whole question of the Canon, was ratified by fifty-three prelates, among whom there was not one German, not one scholar distinguished for historical learning, not one who was fitted by special study for the examination of a subject in which the truth could only be determined by the voice of antiquity. How completely the decision was opposed to the spirit and letter of the original judgments of the Greek and Latin Churches, how far in the doctrinal equalisation of the disputed and acknowledged books of the Old Testament it was at variance with the traditional opinion of the West, how absolutely unprecedented was the conversion of an ecclesiastical usage into an article of belief, will be seen from

[1] Cf. Council of Trent, Session IV.; Council of the Vatican, *Dogmatic Constitution of the Catholic Faith*, chap. ii. can. ii.

the evidence which has been already adduced (*i.e.* in the preceding Treatise).[1]

The Tridentine decree imposed a condition on Biblical interpretation which is properly fatal to all interpretation. No one, it ordains, is to "presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which holy Mother Church, whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, hath held and doth hold, or *even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.*" It will be remembered that at the time of the Vatican Council the opposition argued against the definition of Papal Infallibility, on the specific ground, that they were bound by oath not to accept or expound the Scriptures in any other way than according to the unanimous agreement of the Fathers, and that the proposed dogma notoriously contradicted patristic testimony. "The Fathers of the Church," wrote Döllinger to his Archbishop in defence of his own refusal to accept the Vatican decree, "have all without exception expounded the passages in question (*i.e.* the three Petrine texts) in a sense entirely different from the new Decree; and especially in the passage Luke xxii. 32 they were far from seeing an infallibility granted to all popes. Accordingly, if I were willing to accept the Decrees with this interpretation, without which they are deprived of all Biblical foundation, I should forswear myself."[2]

Moreover, when it is remembered that the "Fathers," according to Roman reckoning, include hundreds of writers, of the most various character, distributed over more than a millennium, it will be apparent that to make their "unanimous consent" the condition of interpreting the Scriptures, is really equivalent in practice to prohibiting interpretation altogether. It would be interesting to know Mr. Lilly's opinion of Cardinal Vaughan's formula. It is but a few years since he expressed himself with some freedom on the subject of the Bible.

"I frankly admit," he wrote, "that if Christianity depended upon a pseudo-scientific view of certain venerable documents, formed at an unscientific period, and irreconcilable with the conclusions of true science, Christianity would be

[1] *On the Canon of the New Testament*, p. 478.

[2] *Vid. Declarations and Letters on the Vatican Decrees*, pp. 83, 84.

doomed. Nor am I in the least disposed to shut my eyes to the real significance of what is called 'the higher criticism'; although I may be permitted to observe that much which passes current under that name appears to me not high criticism in any sense."[1] After stating what he calls "the orthodox Protestant view," he proceeded—

"It is an astounding thesis. And I candidly confess that the disingenuousness—I had almost said the indifference to veracity—displayed by some thick and thin defenders of the old Biblical exegesis fills me with dismay. It suggests to me Bacon's pregnant question, 'Will ye offer unto the Author of Truth the unclean sacrifice of a lie?' It appears beyond doubt that modern research has shown us much which is at variance with 'the traditional thesis' as to the date, authorship, and relative value of the Christian sacred books, just as it has familiarised us with conceptions of the physical universe utterly alien to the minds of their writers."[2]

After quoting Cardinal Newman (whose orthodoxy would never have passed muster at the Archbishop's house), to the effect that a Catholic was quite free to throw over the old Christian belief as to the single Authorship of Isaiah, Mr. Lilly went on—

"There is nothing to prevent a sincere Catholic from going to any length with modern criticism, *which the evidence really warrants*, in dealing with the letter of our Sacred Books. The Divine element in those books no criticism can touch."[3] Yes; but the Decree of Trent, to which Cardinal Vaughan inexorably sends his flock, expressly condemns this discriminating attitude towards the Scriptures, this talk about "relative value of the Christian sacred books," and "the Divine element in them." "The Synod, following the examples of the Orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates *with an equal affection of piety and reverence* all the books both of the Old and New Testament"; and "if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books *entire with all their parts*" [including the Three Witnesses text] "as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate edition," he is pro-

[1] *Vid. The Great Enigma*, p. 186. [2] *Ibid.* p. 107.
[3] *Ibid.*, 2nd edition, 1893, pp. 106–108.

claimed anathema. Cardinal Vaughan is careful to point out that "any" of Dr. St. George Mivart's "heresies" is enough to stamp the act of Communion as "sacrilegious." If words mean anything, and the words I have quoted represent Mr. Lilly's present sentiments, he ought to join Dr. St. George Mivart in his outcast state. What the latter calls, not excessively, the "terrible encyclical about Scripture, known as 'Providentissimus Deus,'" is sentence of death on intellectual honesty in the treatment of Scripture for all who accept its belated obscurantism as the message of Infallible Authority. The Cardinal proceeds—

"I firmly believe and profess that the doctrine of faith which God has revealed has not been proposed like a philosophical invention to be perfected by human ingenuity, but has been delivered as a Divine deposit to the spouse of Christ, to be faithfully kept and infallibly declared, and that therefore *that meaning of the sacred dogmas is to be perpetually retained which our Holy Mother the Church has once declared, and that that meaning can never be departed from under the pretence or pretext of a deeper comprehension of them.* I reject as false and heretical the assertion that it is possible at some time, according to the progress of science, to give to doctrines propounded by the Church *a sense different from that which the Church has understood and understands,* and consequently that the sense and meaning of her doctrines can ever be in the course of time practically explained away or reversed."[1]

I have italicised the crucial propositions of this amazing statement. It is really difficult to treat them with gravity, but they seem to be gravely meant, and have indeed been repeated, extended, and pressed home by the well-known Jesuit, Dr. Clarke, in an article, "Dr. Mivart on the Continuity of Catholicism," contributed to the *Nineteenth Century* (February 1900). The intellectual quality of this remarkable declaration may be sufficiently gathered from the assertion that "the doctrine of the Assumption of the body of the Blessed Virgin into heaven after her death" is "proximate to Faith," and as such "absolutely certain," only to be denied at the cost of

[1] Cf. *Dogmatic Constitution of the Vatican on Catholic Faith*, chap. iv. can. iv.

"a grievous sin against Faith" and "the Church's censures." The candour of the writer may be concluded from his assertion that the Ptolemaic astronomy "received no sort of ecclesiastical approval"; and his courage from the declaration that "to attribute to the *ex cathedra* utterance of any Pope a meaning in any way varying from that which was intended by the Pope who promulgated it, is an act of heresy." Pius IX.'s "Syllabus Errorum" is evidently not the dead letter we had been led to suppose. I cannot further examine Father Clarke's article, but its cynical impudence ought to secure for it the notice of all who desire to appreciate the intellectual atmosphere of Vaticanism. It is a suggestive illustration of Mr. Dell's statement as to the mental poverty of the English Roman Catholics.

The author of the formula which Cardinal Vaughan proposed to Dr. St. George Mivart as a summary of essential Christianity, is stated to be Cardinal Mazzella, a Jesuit who has distinguished himself by throwing the shield of official protection over the infamies recently denounced by the Bishop of Nancy. The two articles in the *Contemporary Review* (March and April 1900) on "Monastic Orders up to date," by E. Saint-Genix, have a very important connection with the "Mivart episode." The most extravagant assertions of Dr. St. George Mivart are less extravagant than the facts set forth from quasi-official Roman sources in the article entitled ominously enough "Roman Catholic Fetishism." The other article on "The Sweating of Orphan Girls," discovers in the highest Roman circles a measure of cynical wickedness which must make even the most devoted Vaticanist (if he retains any sense of moral proportion) impatient of the glib polemics of his ecclesiastical leaders. If anywhere the Roman Church should exhibit its best aspect, it should do so in France; the excuses pleaded in extenuation of the debased superstition of Neapolitans and South Americans can hardly be admitted in the case of the French Catholics. Yet it is precisely in France that the Roman Church discovers its worst infamies. Controversy sinks to a mere tiresome logomachy in presence of the abominations unmasked and defended in the religious communities. It is no longer a question of competing ecclesiastical theories; it has become

an issue of elementary morality. The official Roman Church, the machine worked by the greedy plotters of the Vatican, which speaks its mind in the popular journals edited and circulated by its creatures, which silences good men like Father Duggan of Maidstone, and brutally evicts honest men like Dr. St. George Mivart; which "justifies the wicked for a reward, and takes away the righteousness of the righteous from him"; which poisons the springs of knowledge, and corrupts the simplicity of innocence; which trades on the fears of ignorance, and battens on the bribes of vice; which is in all lands the standing conspirator against political order and social harmony,—that Church must march to the destruction which is its due. *This* Roman Church is as a Christian Church an organised imposture and an embodied libel; but there is, there must be, prone and suffering beneath its tyranny another Church, which, however for the moment submerged and crushed, shall sometime assert itself, and reclaim from the scandals of Vaticanism the good name of Catholic Christianity. Father Duggan and Dr. St. George Mivart, though silenced and, for the time, defeated, have continued in a very dark time a protest, old as the Gospel, which in a future yet shrouded from view, and by modes which we cannot yet imagine, shall prevail. We of the Anglican Church can offer them the homage of our sincere respect, and bring them the comfort of our profound sympathy.

DISSENT IN ENGLAND

I. The Situation under Elizabeth

Delivered in the Chapel of S. Mary's Hospital, Ilford, on 7th October 1900

In asking you to undertake the consideration of Dissent in this country, I am in some sense making a new departure. The study of Church History is happily general, and I do not doubt that information on ecclesiastical affairs is now widely spread among us. I cannot honestly say that I am altogether satisfied with the popular Church Histories which we possess, for almost all are coloured by prepossessions which, however natural and excusable, are not legitimate in the domain of history. But unquestionably there is no lack of excellent manuals of ecclesiastical history, such as the *Introduction to the History of the Church of England*, by my lamented friend, the late Mr. Henry Wakeman, and the more recently published volume of my friend Mr. Hutton. If the *History of the English Church*, edited by the Dean of Winchester and the Rev. William Hunt, maintains the high standard of excellence reached in the opening volume, the English Churchman will be well provided with sound knowledge as to the history of his branch of the Christian Society. I need not mention the numerous and excellent publications of the Church Historical Society. While, then, there is a general disposition to study Church History, I notice that there is, so far, very little disposition to study the history of religion as a whole. Dissent in England has played so great a part in the life of the nation, that not even the most reluctant historian can altogether omit it from his record; but scarcely any serious effort is made to set out the history of Dissent with the same care and justice as are bestowed on the history

of the Church. There are, of course, Dissenting Histories of more or less merit, such as the *History of the Free Churches of England*, by Messrs. Skeats and Miall, and there is a considerable literature treating of the history of particular denominations; but, broadly, it is true that Dissenters are not well provided with information about themselves, that most of their books are sadly marked by anti-ecclesiastical prejudices, and that on their side, perhaps even more than on the side of their traditional opponents, much mischief is worked through lack of knowledge. In justice, however, I must make one exception to this general statement. The late Dr. Stoughton's *History of Religion in England* is an admirable work, in design, in execution, and, above all, in spirit. It does not cover the whole ground, for it only starts with the opening of the Long Parliament, and draws rein at the end of the eighteenth century; but it is the best general account of Dissenting History that I know.

It is not hard to see the causes which have tended to discourage the study of history among Dissenters. Their religious retrospect is a comparatively short one. The oldest Dissenting denominations cannot trace their existence beyond the religious Revolution of the sixteenth century; and, for the most part, it is to the period of the Commonwealth that the student of Dissenting History will find himself led for the origins of Dissent. The history of the nation for a thousand years has no religious interest for the Dissenter as such, whereas, of course, the Churchman finds that the farther he goes back in the history of England the larger is the prominence in which the Church appears on the page of history. Historic studies reduce the Reformation to an episode in the record of the Church of England; it is the necessary starting-point for the History of Dissent. Moreover, since the Reformation, the main stream of national religion has run in the channel of the Church; our religious literature, in spite of some splendid exceptions which we shall presently have to consider, has been the product of Churchmen; the record of Dissent is a humble record of obscure men, living outside the public interests of their time, driven in upon themselves by the hardships of their lot, ill provided with learning, narrowly restricted in their opportunities, not so interesting to the

student of the past as their ecclesiastical contemporaries. Let no one think that all this reflects any discredit on the Dissenters. Discredit, if there be any, belongs to the established authorities of Church and State, which strove, by a long-continued policy of repression, to hinder the growth, restrict the opportunities, and hamper the education of the Dissenters. I only mention these circumstances of Dissenting History in order to explain the comparative neglect which it has received, even at the hands of Dissenters themselves. These very circumstances immensely enhance the religious significance of Dissent as we see it to-day. The present greatness of the Christianity which had its origins in that obscure and unattractive record of English Dissent, throws back on that record a new importance. The humble beginnings of religious movements are no safe guides to their intrinsic greatness; the modern Dissenter need not blush for his spiritual ancestry so long as he can point to the credentials of spiritual activity; nevertheless, I apprehend that, both for himself and for others, it is no small misfortune that his family history is so little regarded.

At the close of the century we are much disposed to cast the horoscope of the nation and of the Church. Political prophecy, we know, is on the whole an employment less serviceable than interesting; but there are some broad features of the religious outlook which cannot be wisely ignored, and prophecy under the circumstances seems a task less dubious than inevitable. The most casual observer must see that the logic of facts is against the conventional assumptions of religious partisans. It may suit the necessities of our Church newspapers to ignore the existence of Dissent, and to speak of a Catholicism in which Dissent has no place; but such an attitude and such a fashion of speech will be intolerable to the thoughtful Christian, who notes that half the Christianity of England, and three-fourths of the Christianity of the English race in America and Australia, is either Dissenting or of the Dissenting type. We hear much enthusiastic talk about the reunion of Christendom; but what reasonable Christian can contemplate a Christendom from which Dissenting Christians are excluded? We hear wonderful things about the progress of Anglicanism. I thank God from my

heart for that progress; but I say that no less progress is made by that Dissenting Christianity which is the noblest offshoot of Anglicanism. Is it not folly, and worse, to indulge in day-dreams of denominational victory which can only be conceived in ignorance and cherished in delusion? If I could have my way, I would insist on every ordination candidate showing a fair knowledge of Dissenting History. I would say to him, "When you become the vicar or rector of a parish, you will find one-third or one-half, perhaps even more, of the parishioners organised into religious communities of their own, strongly and permanently organised, sometimes possessed of endowments, often possessed of large and substantial chapels, in which resident ministers, trained and appointed to their ministry, are regularly engaged in an evangelistic and pastoral work. You ought to know something about those religious communities—what their principles are, and what their history has been; why it is they have come to stand apart from the ancient parochial system which you represent." I have, of course, no right to advise the Dissenting denominations, but I would respectfully submit that, if their ministers were in like manner required to have some sound knowledge of English Church History, the advantage to religion would be considerable; for such mutual knowledge could not fail to induce a profound discontent with the existing situation. On both sides the salutary spirit of self-criticism would be developed, and that appalling self-contentment, which now on all hands stops the way of improvement, would be rendered impossible. History would teach both Churchmen and Dissenters a large patience with the eccentricies of enthusiasm, a great suspicion of sectarian zeal, a dread of every approach to religious coercion, a deep respect for the Christian conscience, a very slight regard for denominational shibboleths. Where so much fault and folly is seen on both sides, the attitude of spiritual arrogance will be proper to neither; where so much personal devotion and sanctity is apparent in both camps, the notion of limiting the Christian name to one or other will seem absurd. In the light of history we can cancel ancient quarrels, and understand obstinate differences, and make allowance for prejudices, and revise standpoints, and release the present from

the yoke of the past, and bring the past in to teach the present.

As some slight contribution to this desirable end, I have invited you here to go with me through a course of lectures on the History of Dissent. I hope I shall be honoured by the presence of many Dissenters. They are very welcome here. I can promise them that I shall not wittingly or willingly offend them; but I cannot promise them that everything I have to say will be agreeable. History is an impartial witness, and its testimony does not often match the interest of partisans. At least, they may be sure that Churchmen will have as good cause to complain as themselves. To both I can but promise to set out the facts honestly, and to interpret them fairly. The subject has interested me for many years. As long ago as 1885, Messrs. Methuen announced a volume on *Dissent in England* from my pen as in preparation; but many obstacles, which I could not then foresee, have hindered the work; and now, after fifteen years, I am able to give a more continuous attention to it, and I hope that, in the course of next year, if I live so long, it will make its appearance. You will not resent this personal information, which I advance as my apology for addressing you on the subject of Dissent at all.

Let me premise that I shall take for granted that all my hearers have a good general knowledge of the history of the Reformation, both on the Continent and in England. Such knowledge is the indispensable preliminary to a serious study of English Dissent, but I cannot undertake here the task of providing it. In the brief time at our disposal, I must confine myself to the subject before us, and assume that you already know all that is otherwise necessary.

The accession of Elizabeth on the death of her half-sister Mary, in November 1558, is, perhaps, the best point at which to begin the history of Dissent. There had been congregations of dissenters from the national worship at an earlier period, but it was only then that the conditions out of which Dissent ultimately grew came into being. When Edward VI., as early as 1550, permitted John a Lasco to form a congregation of German refugees in the Augustinians' Church, the design was not to facilitate, but to hinder separatism.

"It was appointed," writes the young king in his journal, "that the Germans should have the Austin Friars for their church, to have their service in, for avoiding all sects of Anabaptists and such like." The Government of Edward VI. had a lively dread of sectaries. Heresy was punished as severely as in the succeeding reign, only it was more liberally defined. We can understand how intolerant was the atmosphere of the time from this grim entry in the boy-king's journal: "A certain Arrian of the strangers, a Dutchman, being excommunicated by the congregation of his countrymen, was, after long disputation, condemned to the fire." Bishop Latimer makes several allusions to Anabaptists in the sermons he preached before Edward VI. They were evidently regarded with fear as anarchical fanatics, who would overturn all constituted authority in Church and realm.

"I should have told you here," says Latimer, in 1549, "of a certain sect of heretics that speak against this order and doctrine; they will have no magistrates nor judges on the earth. Here I have to tell you what I heard of late, by the relation of a credible person and a worshipful man of a town in this realm of England, that hath above five hundred heretics of this erroneous opinion in it, as he said."[1]

We must remember that the memory of that terrible social rising, the Peasants' War, was still recent, that it was universally regarded as the proper consequence of the Anabaptist propaganda, that the enemies of the Reformation were never weary of accusing the Reformers of anarchic tendencies. England was then, as it has often been since, the natural refuge of the persecuted, and there was reason for the anxiety which moved the Government of Edward VI. to keep a strong hand over the foreign immigrants.

John a Lasco's superintendency extended over an Italian Church and also over a French Church, both in London. There was a congregation of French Walloons at Glastonbury, under a separate superintendent, Valerandus Pollanus; and mention is also made of a Spanish congregation.[2] On Queen Mary's accession all foreigners were commanded to depart

[1] *Vid. Sermons*, vol. i. p. 151 (Parker Society).

[2] Strype's *Memorials of Cranmer*, pp. 343, 346, 352.

from the realm, and this legalised foreign Dissent came to a sudden end; but I have thought it worth while to recall the fact that so early as the reign of Edward VI. there were in the tolerated foreign congregations the earliest examples of that Dissent from the national religion, which was destined to become so large and important a factor in our national history. During the stern government of Queen Mary, congregations of Protestants assembled in London and elsewhere, and worshipped God according to the second Prayer-Book of Edward VI.[1] The London congregation is placed at the head of the Nonconforming Churches in Wilson's *History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches*, where we learn that the "meetings were held alternately near Aldgate, and Blackfriars, in Thames Street, and in ships upon the river"; that sometimes the members "assembled in the villages about London, and especially at Islington, that they might the more easily elude the Bishop's officers and spies." The names of the ministers of this Dissenting congregation have been preserved: among them are those of Edmund Scambler and Thomas Bentham, both of whom afterwards became Elizabethan Bishops, the one of Peterborough and afterwards of Norwich, the other of Lichfield and Coventry. It could not have strengthened the hands of these prelates, when at a later stage they were required to take in hand the suppression of Puritanism, that they themselves had been sturdy Dissenters when the Established system was not to their taste. In any case, we have here a precedent of separatism which could not have been without effect when the Puritans found themselves confronted with the difficult task of determining their attitude towards the Elizabethan Church. Most of the leading Reformers among the clergy fled to the Continent on the

[1] Bishop Jewell, writing to Peter Martyr in 1560, says that sectaries multiplied in spite of the Government during Mary's reign. "We found at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth a large and inauspicious crop of Arians, Anabaptists, and other pests, which I know not how, but as mushrooms spring up in the night and in darkness, so these sprung up in that darkness and unhappy night of the Marian times. These, I am informed, and hope it is the fact, have retreated before the light of purer doctrine, like owls at the sight of the sun, and are now nowhere to be found; or, at least, if anywhere, they are no longer troublesome to our churches."—*Works*, p. 1241 (Parker Society).

accession of Mary,[1] and there they presented an unedifying spectacle of division. The history of the exiles during Mary's reign is the key to the ecclesiastical difficulties of Elizabeth.[2] Let me sketch briefly what happened. The refugees from England, when they found protection at Frankfort, Strasburg, Geneva, Zürich, Basel, and other Protestant centres, were brought into close and continuous relationship with the Reformed Churches of Switzerland and Germany.[3] The influence of John Calvin (born 1509, died 1564) was then supreme. From the little city of Geneva—the whole population of which, perhaps, did not exceed 20,000 souls—this remarkable Frenchman exercised a dominion over Protestant Europe which profoundly affected the course of history. In 1536, when he was but twenty-seven years old, he published his famous work, the *Institutio Religionis Christianae*, which became the theological manual of aggressive Protestantism. Calvin had not merely restated Christianity in the terms of a rigorous logic; he had also created an alternative system of ecclesiastical government. Instead of the ancient Catholic order, with its apostolically ordained bishops and its divinely constituted degrees of the ministry, he proposed the Presbyterian system, which drew its strength from the free consent of the Church, and administered a severe and minute moral discipline. Thus he met the most urgent need of the moment. He gave to Protestantism the weapon it needed. He opposed the Divine right of the Papacy and episcopate with the Divine right of the presbytery. He was the saviour of Protestantism not less truly than

[1] Archbishop Cranmer advised flight, though he would not flee himself. Strype prints a very beautiful letter on the subject, addressed by the Archbishop to one Mrs. Wilkinson, in which the objections to flight are combated. Strype further states that the number of exiles was eight hundred and upwards (*vid. Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer*, p. 449).

[2] "The uncharitableness of the Lutherans on this occasion was very remarkable; they hated the exiles because they were Sacramentarians, and when any English came among them for shelter, they expelled them their cities, so that they found little hospitality in Saxony and other places of Germany where Lutheranism was professed. Philip Melanchthon interceded with the senate on their behalf, but the clergy were so jealous for their consubstantiation, that they irritated the magistrates everywhere against them."—Neal, *History of the Puritans*, i. 76.

[3] *Vid.* Strype's *Memorials of Cranmer*, vol. ii. p. 449; Neal, *History of the Puritans*, vol. i. p. 76.

Ignatius Loyola was the saviour of the Papacy. Both men were the children of a desperate crisis, raised up to avert an imminent disaster. Calvin had established his authority in Geneva only after a protracted conflict with the citizens. His consistory of six ministers and twelve lay elders was "a thoroughly organised inquisition tribunal, which regulated in all details the moral, religious, domestic, and social life of the citizens, called them to account on every suspicion of a fault, had the incorrigible banished by the civil authorities, and the more dangerous of them put to death." [1]

The execution of Servetus [2] for heresy in 1553 will always weigh heavily on Calvin's reputation; but it does not seem to me so significant as the normal severity of his government. In a period of but four years (1542–1546) there were, in Geneva, with a population, as I have said, about half that of Ilford, no less than fifty-seven death sentences carried out with Calvin's approval, and seventy-six sentences of banishment. This was the system which met the English exiles as, with embittered hearts, they arrived from England. It matched their minds wonderfully. It made no terms with the Old Catholic Church. It fought Rome with its own weapons; it waged war to the knife with the Papacy. As tidings reached them from over-sea of the persecution of their friends, we can understand how they would have been disposed to cling the closer to Calvin's severe discipline, which represented the extremest possible contrast to Catholicism. They crowded to Geneva, and were enrolled among the most ardent supporters of the consistorial government. The republic admitted them to its citizenship, and they requited the kindness by a genuine affection. In 1555, when Calvin's predominance was endangered, their votes in the elections established him firmly in his supremacy, which he retained until his death in 1564. Nor did his

[1] Kurtz, *Church History*, vol. ii. p. 304.

[2] The execution was generally approved by the Reformers; see Bullinger to Calvin: "What is your most honourable Senate of Geneva going to do with that blasphemous wretch Servetus? If they are wise, and do their duty, they will put him to death, that all the world may perceive that Geneva desires the glory of Christ to be maintained inviolate."—*Original Letters*, p. 742 (Parker Society).

influence end with his life. He bequeathed to his successor and disciple, Theodore Beza, the international position which he had won for himself.

The English refugees represented, of course, the most advanced Reformers of the English Church; they had just succeeded in carrying through a revision of the Edwardian Prayer-Book; and, at the time when the young king's early death brought all their plans to sudden overthrow, they were using the second Prayer-Book of Edward VI. That Prayer-Book reflected the influence of the learned foreigners, Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer, whom Cranmer had established in the English universities. It adopted a distinctly Zwinglian formula in the Communion Office, and still further simplified the ceremonies; but it was still, from the standpoint of the Calvinist Churches, a very unsatisfactory volume. How unsatisfactory it was the English Protestants had not realised until they found themselves actually face to face with the admired simplicity of Geneva. It was not surprising that many of them at once discarded the Prayer-Book, and adopted with eagerness the form of worship they found established among their co-religionists and protectors. There were, however, others who were otherwise minded. They had in some cases held high place in the Church of England; they were officially responsible for the Prayer-Book; they could hardly with decency repudiate it as superstitious. The martyrdoms in England, especially those of the five bishops, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, and Ferar, created a profound sensation, and distinctly strengthened the hold of the Prayer-Book on the affection of the exiles. It seemed a reflection on the martyrs, almost an insult to their memories, that their work should be so easily and even contemptuously laid aside. Moreover, considerations of prudence were not, perhaps, without effect on some minds. Queen Mary's health was known to be bad, her government was known to be unpopular. The next sovereign would certainly inaugurate another change of policy, most probably a return to the Reformation. It was imprudent to compromise themselves in advance by denouncing what had but yesterday been the lawful system of the Church of England, and to-morrow might be so again. Some of the exiles compromised themselves

most seriously by their extravagant abuse of Queen Mary, denouncing her not merely as an oppressive sovereign, but as disqualified for government by her sex. The latter contention was extremely difficult to explain to Queen Elizabeth's satisfaction, when that "monstre in nature, . . . a woman clad in the habit of man—yea, a woman against nature reigning above man,"[1] as John Knox pleasantly said, was herself a sovereign.

Thus the English refugees fell into two camps in their land of exile. Part held together as the members of the Church of England, worshipped according to the Prayer-Book, and defended the English system; part sought admission to the local Churches, which were generally Calvinist in doctrine and discipline, owned the leadership of Calvin and Bullinger, repudiated the Prayer-Book, and denounced the English system as scarcely less objectionable than the Roman. At Frankfort these two parties came to open conflict. The first refugees belonged to the Puritan section. On their arrival, in June 1554, they sought admission into the French Church, and subscribed the French Confession of Faith.[2]

"After consultation among themselves, they concluded, by universal consent of all present, not to answer aloud after the minister, nor to use the Litany and surplice; but that the public service should begin with a general confession of sins; then the people to sing a psalm in metre in a plain tune, after which the minister to pray for the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, and so proceed to the sermon; after sermon a general prayer for all estates, and particularly for England, at the end of which was joined the Lord's Prayer and the rehearsal of the articles of belief; then the people were to sing another psalm, and the minister to dismiss them with a blessing. They took possession of their church 29th July 1554, and, having chosen a minister and deacons to serve for the present, they sent to their brethren that were dispersed, to invite them to come to Frankfort, where they might hear God's Word truly preached, the sacraments righty ministered,

[1] *Vid.* Maitland's *Essays on the Reformation.*

[2] This was the "Consensus Tigurinus," a formula agreed upon by Calvin and Bullinger, in 1549, with respect to the Lord's Supper.

and Scripture discipline used, which in their own country could not be obtained."[1]

Soon, however, the colony at Frankfort heard that divers prominent ecclesiastics had arrived at Strasburg, Zürich, and Basel, led thither by the convenience of the libraries and printing-presses of those cities. To these, therefore, they sent, asking them to send divines to take charge of the English congregation, and adding that they had brought their religious system nearer to the policy and order of Scripture than the English Prayer-Book. The Strasburg divines demurred to this; whereupon the Frankfort refugees sent to Geneva for Knox, to Strasburg for Haddon, and to Zürich for Lever. These three—all strong Puritans—they elected for their ministers. They found, however, considerable opposition among the other exiles to their proceeding. The refugees at Zürich declined to join them unless the Prayer-Book was used; but the Frankfort folks would not give way. The refugees at Strasburg sent a strong deputation to plead for conformity, but with no better result. The matter was referred to Calvin, and he decided against the Prayer-Book. In March 1555, however, the controversy was rekindled by the arrival of a vigorous Anglican, Dr. Richard Cox, who at once started an active, and in the end successful, agitation for the use of the Prayer-Book. He got rid of Knox by pointing out to the Frankfort magistrates some risky passages in his books, in which he compared the Emperor to Nero. More refugees arriving, Cox found himself in a majority, and gained permission from the magistrates to use the Prayer-Book.

Then the victorious party addressed a letter to Calvin, justifying their conduct. It may be worth while to quote some portion of this letter. They excuse themselves for not consulting him before everything was concluded, and express their doubt whether their opponents have truthfully stated the facts. They disclaim any bigoted adherence to the English system.

"For when the magistrates lately gave us permission to adopt the rites of our native country, we freely relinquished all those ceremonies which were regarded by our brethren as

[1] Neal's *History of the Puritans*, vol. i. p. 77.

offensive and inconvenient. For we gave up private baptisms, confirmation of children, saints' days, kneeling at the Holy Communion, the linen surplices of the ministers, crosses, and other things of the like character. And we gave them up, not as being impure and papistical, which certain of our brethren often charged them with being; but whereas they were in their own nature indifferent, and either ordained or allowed by godly fathers for the edification of our people, we notwithstanding chose rather to lay them aside than to offend the minds or alienate the affections of the brethren. We retain, however, the remainder of the form of prayer and of the administration of the Sacraments, which is prescribed in our book, and this with the consent of almost the whole Church, the judgment of which, in matters of this sort, we did not think should be disregarded."[1]

Of the ten signatories of this letter to Calvin, no less than four became subsequently bishops—Cox, Sandys, Grindal, and Bale.

Calvin's interference leading to no result, the defeated Puritans left Frankfort, and betook themselves to more congenial places. Fox, the martyrologist, and a small party went to Basel. Knox, with the larger party, went to Geneva, where, with the consent of the authorities, he organised the English refugees into a Presbyterian Church after the Calvinist model.

I said that the history of the exiles was the key to the ecclesiastical difficulties of Elizabeth's reign. The sketch of that history which I have set before you will go far to justify the dictum. You can see the seeds of dissension already sown between the men who, by the force of circumstances, would have a leading place in the Elizabethan Church. The quarrels of the exiles were destined to be renewed and fought out within England. The contest at Frankfort over the use of the Prayer-Book was prophetic of similar contests on a greater scale in many English towns. The defeat of the Puritans, and their definite adoption of an alien system, would be rehearsed in the subsequent history of the English Church. Elizabeth's misfortune was that she was forced to employ the most inveterate of partisans to administer a national system.

[1] *Vid. Original Letters*, vol. ii. p. 753.

The deferential relation in which they had stood towards the continental Reformers, and, above all, to Calvin, necessarily affected their conduct at a later stage. It explains the otherwise inexplicable fact that not only the Puritans, but also the Bishops, appealed to Bullinger, Peter Martyr, and Beza for support during the tiresome conflict over the vestments and ceremonies. It explains the otherwise inexplicable influence wielded by Calvin within this island—that overwhelming influence against which Hooker raised his protest:—

"Of what account the Master of Sentences was in the Church of Rome, the same and more amongst the preachers of Reformed Churches Calvin had purchased; so that the perfectest divines were judged they which were skilfullest in Calvin's writings. His books almost the very canon to judge both doctrine and discipline by. French Churches, both under others abroad and at home in their own country, all cast according to that mould which Calvin had made. The Church of Scotland, in erecting the fabric of their Reformation, took the self-same pattern. Till at length the discipline, which was at the first so weak, that without the staff of their approbation, who were not subject unto it themselves, it had not brought others under subjection, began now to challenge universal obedience, and to enter into open conflict with those very Churches which in desperate extremities had been relievers of it."[1]

At the accession of Elizabeth, in November 1558, the Roman Catholic system was fully established, and the Queen made no haste to abolish it. She was crowned with the ceremonial of the unreformed Church; she straitly prohibited all attacks, in the pulpit or elsewhere, on the existing régime. Her attitude was eminently well chosen to discourage Protestant zeal and to calm Catholic apprehensions. This dubious attitude was dictated by necessity; for the weakness of the new Government was manifest. It is a common error to suppose that there was any general dislike of the mediæval Church among the people. Except in London and the home counties (as we call them now), and East Anglia, the Reformation had but little hold on the nation. The barbarities of

[1] *Eccles. Pol.*, Preface, ii. 8.

the Marian persecution had created a revulsion of feeling which helped the Reformers, but their own misdeeds under Edward VI. had not been forgotten, and far into Elizabeth's reign a great part of the population in the north and west remained attached to the old religion. It is true that the mass of the clergy accepted the changes, drastic though they were, effected by the Act of Uniformity; but we have no lack of evidence to show that their acceptance was too often perfunctory and insincere. Foreign intervention in defence of the Roman Catholics was no unlikely contingency, and the Queen's diplomacy would not push matters to extremities. Moreover, we may not forget her singular personality. Elizabeth was, for her sex and station, really learned. Like her formidable father, she prided herself on her theological knowledge; and, like him, she combined a reasoned rejection of the Papacy with a strong dislike of Protestant individualism.

The force of circumstances constituted Elizabeth the leader of the Protestant cause in Europe; but she none the less disliked the Puritans, and was not careful to conceal the fact. Her ecclesiastical government resolved itself into a warfare with Puritanism, in which her own Bishops were, so far as was possible, against her. In that warfare the Queen undoubtedly had the bulk of the nation behind her, and, on the whole, history has approved her attitude; but, at the time, to the eager Reformers just returned from exile, enthusiastic admirers of the thoroughgoing Protestantism of Geneva, and full of the resolve to purge the Church of England without delay from all taint of superstition, we can easily understand that the Queen's prudence was inexplicable and exasperating. The origin of English Dissent is not, as is too often asserted, the corruption and fault of the English clergy; it lies deep in the conditions of the Reformation. It was inevitable that the conservative, national tendency, represented by the Queen, and expressed in the Ecclesiastical Settlement, should come into open opposition with the innovating individualist tendency represented by the returned Puritans. This general cause was allied with a particular cause arising from the deplorable state of the Church during the early years of the reign. In Geneva, as we have shown, the exiles had seen and

admired a vigorous working system of moral discipline; in England they found a state of moral chaos. The rapid and violent changes of the preceding generation had been very unfavourable to the national morality, and the clergy, beyond all others, had suffered. All our evidence points to the conclusion that the first consequence of the religious revolution was a frightful declension in the national morals. We cannot read the literature of the time, whether Protestant or Catholic, without noting this. The destruction of the monasteries had most seriously affected the arrangements for providing, educating, and maintaining the clergy. It is certain that the Church was undermanned and badly served throughout Elizabeth's reign. In order to provide for some continuous religious service in many parishes, the Bishops were compelled to authorise the ministrations of unordained men as readers. You will best gather the nature of the necessity, and the type of the men thus set at work in many districts, from the following letter addressed by Archbishop Parker to Bishop Grindal of London, in August 1560:—

"Whereas, occasioned by the great want of ministers, we and you both, for tolerable supply thereof, have heretofore admitted unto the ministry sundry artificers and others, not traded and brought up in learning, and, as it happened in a multitude, some that were of base occupations; forasmuch as now by experience it is seen that such manner of men, partly by reason of their former profane arts, partly by their light behaviour otherwise and trade of life, are very offensive unto the people, yea, and to the wise of this realm are thought to do great deal more hurt than good, the Gospel there sustaining slander; these shall be to desire and require you hereafter to be very circumspect in admitting any to the ministry, and only to allow such as, having good testimony of their honest conversation, have been traded and exercised in learning, or at least have spent their time with teaching of children, excluding all others which have been brought up and sustained themselves either by occupation or other kinds of life alienated from learning."[1]

Rules were laid down for these readers; they were required to pledge themselves not to preach, administer the

[1] *Correspondence of Archbishop Parker*, p. 120 (Parker Society).

Holy Communion, or baptize, but to read the Common Prayer and keep the registers.[1] They were ordered to "use sobriety in apparel, and especially in the church," to "read daily at the least one chapter of the Old Testament and one other of the New, with good advisement, to the encrease of their knowledge," and to hold themselves ready to leave the parish when required. It is perhaps worthy of our notice that the English people had thus been familiarised with the religious ministrations of laymen. When, at a later period, discontent with the established system took the form of active Dissent, the public conscience was not greatly shocked by the spectacle of unordained preachers; the Church was unconsciously paving the way of Dissent.

Preaching was then the principal function of the ministry, for the Reformation had almost destroyed every other. The abolition of private Masses, and the almost total cessation of the practice of private Confession, had taken from the clergy their principal employment. There were no more pilgrimages; most of the saints' days ceased to be observed; the Sacrament was no longer observed in the churches. Popular interest in religion largely ceased, and reverence seemed to have died out of the land. Preaching was the only substitute for all that had been swept away. Sermons were unquestionably popular, and psalm-singing, as soon as it was started, attracted the people wonderfully. Bishop Jewell, writing in 1560, gives to Peter Martyr a striking account of the situation in London—

"Religion is somewhat more established than it was. The people are everywhere exceedingly inclined to the better part. The practice of joining in church music has very much conduced to this. For, as soon as they had once commenced singing in public, in only one little church in London, immediately not only the churches in the neighbourhood, but even the towns far distant, began to vie with each other in the same practice. You may now sometimes see at Paul's Cross, after the sermon, six thousand persons, old and young, of both sexes, all singing together, and praising God."[2]

[1] *Vid.* Strype, *Annals*, p. 306.
[2] *Works of Bishop Jewell*, p. 1231 (Parker Society).

Preachers, then, were in great demand. They were needed for the defence of the religious changes; they were needed for the satisfaction of the spiritual needs of a growing religious public, which had no other notion of religion than that of hearing the Word. But here the Government had to face the fact that nearly all the preachers were Puritans; that their polemical ardour could not be confined within safe bounds; that, once started on a sermon, they gave free play to the vehement scorn with which they regarded the cautious ecclesiastical policy of the Queen. In 1562 the Bishop of Exeter laid before the Convocation a paper containing his "judgment for doctrine and discipline." From that paper I take the following account of the Puritan preachers, which shows the difficulty of the position:—

"For matters ecclesiastical which be indifferent, there be some preachers which cannot abide them, but do murmur, spurn, kick, and very sharply do inveigh against them, naming them things of Iniquity, Devilish, and papistical—namely, I know one preacher, not of the basest sort nor estimation, which did glory and boast that he made eight sermons in London, against Surplices, Rotchetts, Tippets, and Caps, counting them not to be perfect that do wear them." [1]

Elizabeth cannot be blamed for prohibiting preachers of this type; but it is sufficiently evident that their suppression would be greatly resented. When the Church lay desolate—many parishes wholly destitute of religious ministrations, many served by readers of whom not a few were illiterate, or scandalous, or both at once—it seemed intolerable to silence able and earnest preachers because they held strong opinions about such trifling matters as vestments and ceremonies. It is certain that the Queen's vigorous policy was disapproved and lamented by the Bishops, whose sympathies were on the side of the Puritans; but the Queen knew what the nation would stand better than the prelates, and in the sequel her wisdom was demonstrated.

It is hard for us to sympathise with the Puritans; but let us be just. Parker, Grindal, Jewell, and their contemporaries were among the wisest men of their time, and

[1] Strype's *Annals*, p. 309.

they shared to the full the vehement antipathy to everything that savoured of Rome. Bishop Jewell was the most prominent and perhaps the ablest champion of the Elizabethan Church; his famous *Apology* ranked with Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, the Books of Homilies, the Prayer-Book, and the Bible, as one of the indispensable possessions of every parish clergyman; yet he desired to abolish even the surplice. The dread of Rome, which inspired this excessive reluctance to have any points of resemblance, was not without justification in that age. Remember that, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the overwhelming political superiority of Catholicism was as plain as the weakness of Catholicism is at present; that the Papacy, in alliance with the Catholic sovereigns, had embarked on a holy war against Protestantism; that there was good cause for thinking that victory would follow the attempt. In 1567 the Duke of Alva was beginning his ever-memorable career in the Netherlands, at the close of which he boasted that, in the six years of his government, he had sent 18,000 persons to the executioner, besides the multitudes whom he had slain in war. In 1572 the massacre of the French Protestants took place on S. Bartholomew's Day. Imagine the consternation in England when the tidings came that more than 50,000 persons had been perfidiously massacred by the orders of their own sovereign, solely because they were Protestants. Soon the fugitives began to arrive on these shores. It was well understood on all hands that the French massacres were but part of the grand attempt to stamp out the Reformation. The Pope celebrated the event with a solemn procession as a notable religious victory. Archbishop Parker wrote to Lord Burleigh that there was rejoicing among the English Roman Catholics.[1] There were real grounds for the terror with which Englishmen generally regarded Rome. The Queen's dislike to the Puritans, and her firm insistence on the Anglican ceremonies, seemed strangely perverse to her best subjects. We shall be unjust if we forget the complex and difficult circumstances of the time.

This brief review of the ecclesiastical situation in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign explains the origin of Dissent.

[1] *Parker's Correspondence*, p. 399.

No human wisdom could have united in the National Church its historic elements and the vehement radicalism of the Puritans. The Reformation was a twofold movement. It was a new birth, the release of hitherto latent forces, the opening of a wider horizon to Christendom. The nations which accepted the Reformation became the heirs of the future; and, in spite of the dreadful sacrifices involved in their breach with the traditional system, they have more and more approved their decision in experience. But the Reformation was also a reaction provoked by the long-standing and grievous corruptions of Christendom — a reaction which was inflamed to frenzy by the circumstances of the time. The Puritans embodied this aspect of the Reformation in its extreme form. Now, history does not report well of reactions. They partake too much of the character of Nemesis to be themselves satisfactory. At the time they carry all before them; they sweep away in indiscriminating resentment the good as well as the bad features of the system which gives them birth. They look worst in the retrospect; their justifications are always in the actual conditions of the time. There was no necessary connection between vestments and ceremonies and the atrocities of Alva or the fires of Smithfield, but they seemed to be in alliance; and men in panic, men who had suffered, men who were witnesses of those appalling iniquities, may be pardoned if they failed to distinguish between the accidental and the essential, and pressed for a total abolition of "the very vestiges of error."

It is true that the Elizabethan Puritans were not technically Dissenters, only Nonconformist members of the National Church.[1] The first avowed Dissenters were those Anabaptist sectaries of whom the Puritan clergy were wont to speak with such aversion. It is true that the conflict within the National Church, between the conservative national element and the innovating Puritan element, was protracted through several

[1] "Is it not," asks Coleridge, "an historical error to call the Puritans Dissenters? Before S. Bartholomew's Day they were essentially a part of the Church, and had as determined opinions in favour of a Church establishment as the bishops themselves."—*Table Talk*, p. 96.

generations, and has lingered on even to our own time; but the main course of the Puritan movement, and its natural development, have been outside the National Church in the sphere of historic Dissent. So long as there seemed a probability that the national system could be captured, the Puritans themselves bent all their energies in that direction; they either did not realise, or would not face, the tendency of their principles; they maintained an attitude of contemptuous dislike towards the sectaries; but events were too strong for them. The patriotism of the people, kindled to an enthusiasm by the successful war with Spain, strengthened the Church of England, and stamped on the Puritans the character of bad citizens. The numerous refugees from the Continent brought a bolder spirit of ecclesiastical experiment into the scene. The Puritans were perplexed and compromised by the new sectaries, who, while adopting their principles, pushed them to different and more logical conclusions. Dissent was the legitimate expression of Puritanism, and Puritanism had its origin in the very conditions of the Reformation.

In the Hampton Court Conference, with which I propose to deal in the next lecture, we reach a landmark in the evolution of Nonconformity into Dissent. We shall then have an excellent opportunity for inquiring into the actual principles of the Puritans, and estimating how far there was any real possibility that they could be reconciled to a Church which clung with such pertinacity to the historic basis of her politico-ecclesiastical constitution.

II. THE HAMPTON COURT CONFERENCE, JANUARY 14, 16, 18, 1604

Delivered in the Chapel of S. Mary's Hospital, Ilford, on 4th November 1900

The closing years of Elizabeth's long reign were comparatively peaceful. The Queen had made plain enough her determination to admit no changes in the ecclesiastical system. The mass of the nation was not actively hostile to the Church, and, though there was much sympathy with the Puritans, and a general desire to conciliate them, there was a prevailing sense that they ought to accept the established arrangements, and not endanger the peace of the community by an obstinate insistence on points which could not be seriously regarded as of primary importance. The Puritans themselves were biding their time. The next monarch seemed pledged in advance to their cause. James, it was thought, could hardly adopt an attitude of hostility towards men whose ideal of ecclesiastical government was that Presbyterian system established in his native Scotland. The anxiety of the Bishops was scarcely less evident than the expectation of the Puritans. On all hands it was felt that the new King's accession would inaugurate an epoch of change. The régime of rigid uniformity seemed destined to die with the old Queen.

Early on the morning of 24th March 1603, Elizabeth passed to her account. In the long series of English sovereigns there is none whose name has been held in greater honour. Her faults of character and conduct were sufficiently obvious. She was vain, false, fickle, and cruel; but she had great qualities, and a curiously just perception of her duty. It is much to say, and yet nothing less will satisfy the witness of history, that in that wonderful epoch, when in every direction the latent forces of English nationhood were bursting into view, in the age of Spenser, Shakespeare, Sydney, Hooker, Raleigh, Cecil, and many others, whose names are for ever honourable in the record of England, Elizabeth was worthy to stand at the head of the English

people, and guide the course of its destinies. The Church of England owes more to the great Queen than to any other individual. If the mighty reaction embodied in Puritanism did not have free course in this country, the principal credit is hers. To her, under God, we owe the preservation of those historic elements, which give its distinguishing character to our Reformed Church. Our Prayer-Book, as we have it, is her gift. Our tradition of theological liberty is the impress of her character. If we are able to exult in the Catholic heritage which as English Churchmen we have received in the Church of our fathers, we owe it, in the providence of God, chiefly to the great Queen.

Let me observe in passing how notable an influence in our ecclesiastical history has been the character of our sovereigns. Of the Tudors this is too obvious to be missed by any. The fault is scarcely less obvious in the case of the Stuarts. James I. was an unknown quantity when he ascended the English throne at the age of thirty-seven. His relations with the Presbyterian Church in his native kingdom had never been amicable or easy. He was known to desire the restoration of Bishops; he was suspected of leaning towards Papistry; but he had given little indication as yet of his theological interests, and it seemed improbable that he would alienate his Scottish subjects by any marked favour to the Church of England. Both Bishops and Puritans hastened to gain his ear; the latter were first in the field, but the former obtained the best reception.[1] On his progress towards

[1] The ministers of the Synod of Lothian met the King above Haddington, and presented a petition, asking, among other things, "for releefe of good brethrein of the ministrie of England." James replied "that he was not minded at the first to urge anie alteratioun. As for Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Travers, and some others, he understoode they were at freedome. He would show favour to honest men, but not to Anabaptists." At Berwick, "Johne Matthew, Bishop of Durhame, mett him with his rotchet and corner cappe"; but some Scotch ministers who met him a short distance from the town "were bidden depart, without anie further speeche."—Calderwood's *Historie of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol. vi. pp. 222, 223.

It is clear that the Scotch clergy were fully alive to the importance of the occasion; see Sir Patrick Murray's letter to "Maister Selbie," written from Winchester, October 12, 1603: "We are muche bound to Mr. Patrick Galloway for his constancie in the behalf of the caus. I am ashamed of the backwardnesse of the ministers to further their owne caus. The diligence of the adverse party is incredible. I have no acquaintance northward but with yourself, Mr.

London he was met by a deputation of Puritan ministers, who presented to him a lengthy statement of their grievances in a document which is known as the Millenary Petition. As this document was the immediate cause of the Conference at Hampton Court, and as it contains a detailed and authoritative exposition of the Puritan position, it will be worth our while to examine it.

The ministers describe themselves "as the faithful servants of Christ, and loyal subjects to his Majesty, desiring and longing for the redress of divers abuses of the Church," who, although for many reasons they had reluctantly subscribed the Prayer-Book, were "all groaning as under a common burden of human rites and ceremonies," and therefore besought his Majesty for relief. They then set out, under four heads, the articles of their complaint.

The first dealt with the Church service; the next with Church ministers; the third with Church property; and the fourth with Church discipline. They concluded with a further request that they might, either by writing or in conference, be permitted to show that the abuses named in the petition and others were "not agreeable to the Scriptures." The strength and the weakness of the Puritan position are well shown in this statement of their case. Their fundamental principle was the appeal to Scripture; but when we consider the actual matters at issue, it is manifest that the appeal to Scripture could not be reasonably made. They were attributing to Scripture a character which it did not claim and could not sustain, when they looked to it for the authoritative determination of the order and ceremonies of Christian worship, and the details of ecclesiastical discipline.

Mortoun, and the Bp. of Carlill. I pray you be carefull to send all the ministers and gentlemen weill affected, to further this businesse. I feare most the slownesse of the north parts. If it be so I will blame you. The great touns sould bring in their petitiouns by themselves. You may doe weill to send into Scotland, that there may be petitiouns from all the presbytereis to the king, in the behalfe of the ministers of England. . . . I would the Scotch presbytereis w^d be petitioners, that our bps. might be like theirs in authoritie, though they keepe their livings. The king is resolved to have a preaching ministrie, to mitigat subscription, and to restore the censures of the kirk *ad integram*. All the ministers of England are advertised of the project against the conference, and are resolved to send the survey to the king's majestie."—*Ibid.* pp. 234, 235.

Imagine finding in the Bible authority for such demands as these—

"That the Cross in baptism, interrogatories ministered to infants, Confirmation, as superfluous, may be taken away; baptism not to be ministered by women, and so explained; the cap and surplice not urged; that examination may go before the Communion; that it be ministered with a sermon; that divers terms of priests and absolution, and some other used, with the ring in marriage, and other such-like in the Book, may be corrected; the longsomeness of service abridged; Church songs and music moderated to better edification; that the Lord's day be not profaned, the rest upon holydays not so strictly urged; that there may be an uniformity of doctrine prescribed; no popish opinion to be any more taught or defended; no ministers charged to teach their people to bow at the Name of Jesus; that the canonical Scriptures only be read in the Church."

They were on stronger ground when they dealt with matters of practical importance.

"That none hereafter be admitted into the ministry but able and sufficient men; and those to preach diligently, and especially upon the Lord's day; that such as be already entered and cannot preach may either be removed, and some charitable course taken with them for their relief; or else to be forced, according to the value of their livings, to maintain preachers; that non-residency be not permitted; that King Edward's statute for the lawfulness of ministers' marriage be revived; that ministers be not urged to subscribe, but, according to the law, to the Articles of Religion, and the King's supremacy only."

Here we notice the exaggerated importance which the Puritans attached to preaching, and the impossible demand that ministers should be freed from subscription to the Prayer-Book—impossible, because, if conceded, the whole conduct of public worship would have been left to the caprice of individual ministers, an arrangement which could only have worked out in scandalous confusion.

Their objections to commendams, pluralities, non-residence, and impropriations were universally admitted to be intrinsically just; but they did not sufficiently allow for the extreme

difficulty which then, as now, was caused by the poverty of the benefices. Their complaints in the matter of Church discipline were certainly well founded; but they greatly weakened their case by suggesting, not obscurely, that the Presbyterian system was divinely instituted. On this point, too, they would most easily come into collision with the King, who cherished a personal resentment against the democratic régime of the Kirk.

This statement of the Puritan demands was not the only document which the King had received. The greatest thinker of the time, Lord Bacon, had placed in his hands a paper, entitled "Certain considerations touching the better pacification and edification of the Church of England."[1] It was not the first appearance of the writer in the vexed region of ecclesiastical politics. In 1589, when the Marprelate controversy was at its height, Bacon drew up "an advertisement touching the controversies of the Church of England," which is a masterly and luminous review of the situation from the standpoint of a broad-minded, religious statesman. These two papers may be taken to express the view of cultivated Englishmen. The substantial justifications of Puritanism are admitted, while its unreasonable insistence on secondary matters, its arbitrary temper, its excessive deference to foreign models, its anarchic tendencies, are denounced. Bacon saw clearly that the unyielding attitude of the Queen could not be maintained against the waxing force of Puritanism. Some concessions must be made if the disaster of revolution was to be averted. The accession of a new monarch, untrammelled by his past conduct, personally disconnected with both the opposing parties, seemed to provide an excellent opportunity for revising the ecclesiastical settlement in the interest of peace, making terms with the Puritans, and drawing into the service of the National Church their devotion and ability.

Bacon begins by affirming the need of reformation and the suitableness of the time for it. Then he points out the "two circumstances in the administration of Bishops" wherein he could never be satisfied: the one, the sole exercise of their authority; the other, the deputation of their authority. He

[1] *Vid.* Spedding, *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon*, vol. i. p. 74 ff.; vol. iii. p. 103.

particularly censures the *ex-officio* oath, "whereby men are enforced to accuse themselves, and (that that is more) are sworn unto blanks, and not unto accusations and charges declared." Then he passes to the Liturgy, the ceremonies, and subscription. He steers a middle way between the Bishops and the Puritans.

"It is good to take example, how that the best actions of the worship of God may be extolled excessively and superstitiously. As the extolling of the Sacrament bred the superstition of the Mass, the extolling of the Liturgy and prayers bred the superstition of the monastical orders and oraisons. And so no doubt preaching likewise may be magnified and extolled superstitiously, as if all the whole body of God's worship should be turned into an ear."

He would conciliate the Puritans by dropping the word "priest" as misleading, and omitting the Absolution except in cases of previous excommunication. He suggests that Confirmation had been wrongly connected with Baptism, being properly preparative to Holy Communion; that private baptism by women or lay persons was indefensible; that the ring in marriage was scarcely worthy of that solemn service; that music in churches might with advantage be regulated. He would not enforce the cap and surplice to the loss of good ministers who held them to be superstitious, "the rather because the silencing of ministers by this occasion is (in this scarcity of good preachers) a punishment that lights upon the people as well as upon the party." The object of subscription being "to bind in the unity of faith," it was best secured by urging subscription "rather for articles of doctrine than for rites and ceremonies and points of outward government." He then deals with the urgent question of preaching ministers. He begins by some sage reflections on the mischiefs attending the Puritan admiration of preachers.

"For while they inveigh against a dumb ministry, they make too easy and too promiscuous an allowance of such as they account preachers, having not respect enough to years, except their gifts be extraordinary; not respect enough to their learnings in other arts, which are handmaids to divinity; not respect enough to the gift itself, which many times is none at all. For, God forbid that every man that can take unto

himself boldness to speak an hour together in a church upon a text, should be admitted for a preacher, though he mean never so well."

To improve the quality of preachers, he suggests the revival and regulation of the religious exercises known as "prophesyings," which Elizabeth had suppressed, against the advice of Archbishop Grindal, and an improvement in the Bishops' examinations of Ordination candidates. To meet the case of the parishes for whom no preachers could be provided, he would permit a certain measure of itinerancy. He speaks strongly about the existing abuses in the matter of excommunication, non-residents, and pluralities, and makes divers proposals for relieving the poverty of the benefices.

King James was in many respects well qualified for the rôle which Bacon proposed to him. He was totally free from fanaticism, naturally averse to severe measures, a sincere lover of peace, and a genuinely religious man. He was, moreover, really learned, and the personal part in religious discussions which he took was not altogether without excuse in his theological knowledge. Against these qualifications must be set two broad disadvantages. James was inordinately vain. The curious vanity of the pedant was in his case united with the normal pride of kingship. No monarch was ever more easily the victim of flatterers, and in the art of flattery the Bishops were better skilled than the Puritans. James was also extremely vindictive where his vanity had been wounded; and he had suffered many humiliations at the hands of the Scottish presbyters. He saw in the Puritans the same independent carriage, and heard from them the same language of exorbitant religious pretension. They waked his fears, while they wounded his pride. Thus there was a conflict of tendencies in the King's mind. His deliberate judgment disposed him to accept the prudent counsels of Bacon; his well-instructed intelligence enabled him to estimate very justly the Puritan complaints; but the sycophancy of the English Court was infinitely grateful to him; he enjoyed the adulation of the English prelates; and could not refuse himself the double satisfaction of overcoming the Puritans in argument, and trampling on them in an unquestioned supremacy.

On 25th July 1603 the King was crowned at Westminster

with the accustomed rites. The Church and the monarchy are never so closely united as in that solemn ceremony of Coronation. The Oath [1] administered to the sovereign by the Archbishop of Canterbury pledges him to the championship of the National Church. Archbishop Whitgift was not the man to allow the full meaning of the royal promises to be obscured, nor was James the man to underrate it. The Conference, asked for in the Millenary Petition, and originally, perhaps, designed to be a genuine conference on equal terms between the Bishops and the Puritans, gradually changed its character, until, when it actually met at Hampton Court in January 1604, there was no longer any pretence of equal treatment. The Puritans were made to feel from the outset that the case was already decided against them; that they were unreasonable people, to whom the royal clemency deigned to give audience; that the aim of the Conference was not the satisfaction of their demands, but the demonstration of their wrongheadedness. The Elizabethan policy of repression was to be affirmed, facilitated, and continued.

On Saturday the 14th of January, about eleven o'clock, the members of the Conference assembled at Hampton Court.[2] The Church was represented by the Archbishop of Canterbury and eight bishops, eight deans, and two lesser dignitaries;

[1] *Vid.* Taylor's *Glory of Regality*, p. 239, where the Oath is printed.

[2] The members of the Conference, according to Fuller, were—

Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury.
Bancroft, Bishop of London.
Matthews, Bishop of Durham.
Bilson, Bishop of Winchester.
Babington, Bishop of Worcester.
Rudd, Bishop of S. David's.
Watson, Bishop of Chichester.
Robinson, Bishop of Carlisle.
Dove, Bishop of Peterborough.
The Dean of the Chapel.
The Dean of Christ Church.
The Dean of Worcester.
The Dean of Westminster (Andrewes).
The Dean of S. Paul's (Overall).
The Dean of Chester (Barlow).
The Dean of Salisbury (Bridges).
The Dean of Windsor.
Dr. Field.
Dr. King.

the Puritans were represented by only four divines—Reynolds, Sparks, Knewstubs, and Chaderton, who were, however, accompanied by a large party of their friends.[1]

The inequality in numbers would in any case have seriously handicapped the Puritans; but pains were taken to impress on them from the first the consciousness of inferiority. On the first day they were not admitted at all. The King called in the Bishops and deans, and held a private discussion with them. He began by making "a very admirable speech, of an hour long at least." Barlow, whose account of the Conference is our main source of information, reports the royal oration at some length.

As it indicates the King's attitude, it will be worth our while to make a brief quotation. He began by stating that, in calling the Conference, he was but following the example of all Christian princes, who, in the commencement of their reign, usually take the first course for the establishing of the Church; that he had no design of changing anything that was well established, but only to confirm that which he found well settled already.

"Which state, as it seemed, so affected his royal heart, that it pleased him both to enter into a gratulation to Almighty God (at which words he put off his hat) for bringing him into the promised land, where religion was purely professed, where he sat among grave, learned, and reverend men; not, as before elsewhere, a King without state, without honour, without order, where beardless boys would brave him to his face."

He assured the prelates that "he called not this assembly for any Innovation, acknowledging the government ecclesi-

[1] The authorities for the Conference are these—

1. Barlow, "Sum and Substance of the Conference," printed in *Phenix*, i. pp. 139–177.

2. Montague, Letter to his Mother, *Winw. Mem.* ii. p. 13.

3. Galloway, Letter to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, *apud* Calderwood, *Historie of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol. vi. p. 241.

4. Matthews, Letter printed in Strype's *Whitgift*, App. xlv.

5. Fuller, *Church History of Britain.*

6. Beaulieu MSS., Paper of Instructions to the Puritan Divines, with a Synopsis of the Arguments. From this paper it appears that five ministers were "Ministers of the Conference"; two "at their Conference and in place"; and no less than twenty-seven "at, but not in place."

astical, as it now is, to have been approved by manifold blessings from God Himself," but only to rectify such abuses and corruptions as had crept in during recent years. He said that—

"He had received many complaints since his first entrance into the kingdom, especially through the dissensions in the Church, of many disorders, as he heard, and much disobedience to the laws, with a great falling away to Popery; his purpose therefore was, like a good Physician, to examine and try the complaints, and fully to remove the occasions thereof, if they prove scandalous, or to cure them if they were dangerous; or if but frivolous, yet to take knowledge of them, thereby to cast a sop into Cerberus's mouth, that he may never bark again; his meaning being, as he pleased to profess, to give factious spirits no occasion hereby of boasting or glory, for which cause he had called the Bishops in severally by themselves, not to be confronted by the contrary opponents, that if anything should be found meet to be redressed, it might be done (which his Majesty twice or thrice reiterated as occasion served) without any visible alteration."

The King then propounded sundry points in which he desired to be satisfied. We may take Dr. Montague's account as, on the whole, more trustworthy and much shorter than Barlow's.[1]

"In the Prayer-Book he (the King) named the General Absolution, the Confirmation of Children, and the Private Baptism by Women. These three were long disputed between the King and the Bishops. In the conclusion, the King was well satisfied in the two former, so that the manner might be changed, and some things cleared. For the private Baptism, it held three hours at least, the King alone disputing with the Bishops, so wisely, wittily, and learnedly, with that pretty patience, as I think never man living heard the like. In the end he wan this of them, That it should only be administered by ministers, yet in private houses, if occasion required; and that whosoever else should baptize should be under punishment."

With respect to the Bishops' jurisdiction, the King, following Bacon's lead, insisted on abolishing excommunica-

[1] *Apud* Spedding, *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon*, iii. p. 128.

tion for trifling causes, and associating with the Bishops in the exercise of their functions "some grave men to be assistants with them in all censures."

"These things done, he propounded matters whereabout he hoped there would be no controversy; as to have a learned ministry, and maintenance for them as far as might be. And for pluralities and non-residences, to be taken away, or at least made so few as possibly might be."

Thus ended the first day's proceedings. James had enjoyed himself immensely, and, on the whole, had shown to advantage. He was evidently very anxious to show the Bishops and Lords that the succession of learned sovereigns would be worthily maintained. The deference with which his harangues were received pleased him greatly; it was a new experience, and as agreeable as novel. Barlow[1] echoes the adulation of his colleagues when he describes the admiration which the King inspired—

"Sending us away, not with contentment only, but astonishment; and which is pitiful, you will say, with shame to us all, that a King brought up among Puritans, not the learnedst men in the world, and school'd by them; swaying a kingdom full of business and troubles, naturally given to much exercise and repast, should in points of divinity show himself so expedite and perfect, that the greatest scholars and most industrious students there present might not outstrip him. But this one thing I might not omit, 'that his Majesty should profess, howsoever he lived among Puritans, and was kept for the most part as a Ward under them, yet since he was of the age of his Son, ten years old, he ever disliked their opinions; as the Saviour of the World said, Though He lived among them, He was not of them.'"

It augured ill for the Puritans that the King and the prelates were on such terms with one another that they could unite in abusing Puritanism.

On Monday, 16th January, the Conference was resumed. On this occasion only two Bishops, to be nominated by the Archbishop, were permitted to be present: but the Puritans gained little by the fact, since Whitgift nominated the Bishops

[1] "Sum and Substance of the Conference," contracted by W. Barlow, Dean of Chester (*Phenix*, vol. i. p. 139).

of London and Winchester, their two most strenuous opponents.[1] The King opened the proceedings with a speech, which was on the whole conciliatory, and then called on the Puritans to state their case, The four ministers then knelt down, and Dr. Reynolds, speaking for the rest, submitted four propositions—

1. That the doctrine of the Church might be preserved in purity according to God's Word.

2. That good pastors might be planted in all churches to preach the same.

3. That the Church government might be sincerely ministered according to God's Word.

4. That the Book of Common Prayer might be fitted to more increase of piety.

He then proceeded to explain and defend his propositions. He would have the Thirty-nine Articles amended in a Calvinist sense, and "the nine assertions orthodoxal, as he termed them, concluded upon at Lambeth," better known as the Lambeth Articles, inserted into that formulary. He instanced some other amendments in the Articles which he thought necessary, especially instancing what he called a contradiction between the Twenty-fifth Article, which seems to ascribe Confirmation to "the corrupt following of the Apostles," and the Confirmation Service, where the Bishop's action is justified by the example of the Apostles. He had got thus far when he was rudely interrupted by Bancroft, Bishop of London, who kneeled down and prayed the King not to suffer longer speech from one who was schismatical and foresworn. This was too much even for James. He said—

"He misliked his (the Bishop's) sudden interruption of Dr. Reynolds, whom he should have suffered to have taken his course and liberty; concluding, that there is no order,

[1] "Upon Monday his Majesty appointed certain of the best learned of the preciser sort to be before him in the Privy Chamber, to hear what they could object, viz. Dr. Reynolds, Dr. Sparke, Mr. Chatterton, and Mr. Knewstubbs. To whom his Highness used more shorte and round Speech. And admitted only two Bishops to be present, to be named by my Lord's Grace of Canterbury. Who sent thither the Bishops of London and Winchester; while we the rest were with him, setting down the form of the former points."—Matthew, *apud* Strype's *Whitgift*, p. 237.

nor can be any effectual issue of disputation, if each party might not be suffered, without chopping, to speak at large what he would. And therefore willed, that either the Doctor should proceed, or that the Bishop would frame his answer to these motions already made; altho', saith his Majesty, some of them are very needless."

This was the King's last appearance as an impartial chairman. Henceforward he plunged into the fray as an eager disputant against the Puritans. The Bishop of London divided with his sovereign the dubious honour of the unequal fight. The four ministers, thus overwhelmed by the irrelevant authority of their august opponent, and unprotected from the chair, made the best fight they could; but, not unnaturally, they failed to make the most of their case; and their case, it must be admitted, was by no means as sound as they supposed. There will be no difference of opinion now as to the justice of the King's decision not to admit the Lambeth Articles into the Anglican Confession of Faith. The King was right in resisting the tendency to exaggerate theological speculation at the expense of practical morality. He had an easy task in convincing the Puritans of narrowness and unreason, when they pressed for the prohibition of those innocent and eloquent ceremonies which the Church had inherited from the earliest ages of Christianity, and which were endeared to the people by many pious and tender associations. But what can be said of the insults which were gratuitously hurled at men who were in a minority, and at obvious disadvantage, and, none the less, representatives of a great multitude of the more religious people both in Scotland and England? Barlow relates, with a satisfaction which is sufficiently suggestive, that the discussion was interrupted by unseemly banter between the King and the lords. "A Puritan is a Protestant strayed out of his wits," was a gibe which hugely tickled the august company, before whom the four ministers seemed to take a position more resembling that of prisoners before a bench of magistrates, than that of fellows in an equal conference. One suggestion, however, of Dr. Reynolds' gained the royal approval, in spite of Bishop Bancroft's undisguised contempt. "He moved his Majesty that there might be a new 'translation of the Bible.'" The

insolent Bishop broke in with the remark that "if every man's humour should be followed, there would be no end of translating." But the King was otherwise minded. He had smarted under the personal applications to which the Genevan renderings had lent themselves in the hands of the Presbyterian preachers, and he was scholarly enough to recognise the importance of the proposal. The famous translation issued in 1611, and everywhere known as the "Authorised Version," owed its existence to the Puritans. It was the worthiest result of the Hampton Court Conference.

Perhaps, to make amends to Bishop Bancroft for conceding anything to the minority, James accompanied his concession with a characteristic insult.

"'Surely,' he said, 'if these be the greatest matters you be grieved with, I need not have been troubled with such importunities and complaints as have been made unto me; some other more private course might have been taken for your satisfaction'; and withal, looking upon the lords, he shook his head, smiling."

Later in the day Bancroft had his revenge. Barlow's narrative gives no clue as to the occasion which prompted his action. He was plainly determined to wreck the Conference; at some pause in the discussion he saw his opportunity, and seized it. Falling on his knees, he prayed permission to make some petitions in his turn.

"First, that there might be amongst us a praying ministry another while: for whereas there are in the ministry many excellent duties to be performed, as the absolving of the penitent, praying for and blessing of the people, administering of the Sacraments, and the like: it is come to that pass now, that some sort of men thought it the only duty required of a minister to spend the time in speaking out of a pulpit; sometimes, God wot, very indiscreetly and unlearnedly; and this with so great injury and prejudice to the Celebration of Divine Service, that some ministers would be content to walk in the churchyard till sermon time, rather than be present at public prayer."

We have good reason to know that preaching was unduly magnified at the expense of the other functions of the ministry, and individuals may have been guilty of the extravagant

conduct mentioned; but Bancroft knew that he was uttering an injurious libel when he suggested that the Puritan party defended such conduct, and as a Bishop he knew also that the worst offenders against reverence were not the Puritans. However, he gained his immediate purpose of raising prejudice against the ministers. The King liked the motion exceeding well, "very acutely taxing the hypocrisy of our times, which placeth all religion in the ear, through which there is an easy passage." The Bishop went on to urge his next request, "that till such time as learned and sufficient men might be planted in every congregation, that godly homilies might be read, and the number of them increased; and that the opponents would labour to bring them into credit again, as formerly they brought them into contempt. 'Every man,' saith he, 'that can pronounce well, cannot indite well.'"

Again it sounded plausible enough, and again the King was complacent; but how injurious was the suggestion that the Puritans had set themselves to discredit the readers and the Homilies! Nothing was said about the Elizabethan policy of silencing able ministers and substituting readers in their places; yet that was the essence of the Puritan complaint. Once more the Bishop prayed "that pulpits might not be made pasquils, wherein every humorous or discontented fellow might traduce his superiors." Nothing could be more agreeable to James, always sensitive to political sermons, and not without cause. Bancroft having risen from his knees, this singular episode ended, and the Conference proceeded. Dr. Reynolds objected to the use of the Apocrypha in church, and was answered by the Bishops. The King seized the opportunity to air his learning by controverting the Puritan objection to the Book of Maccabees at considerable length, to the admiration of the prelates and lords. He concluded by bidding Dr. Reynolds send in to the Archbishop of Canterbury a list of such chapters as seemed to him offensive.

Mr. Knewstubs now took up the Puritan case, and advanced the objection to the questions in the Baptismal Service. The King, who now practically conducted the whole case for the Church, answered him at length. The minister pleaded for the omission of the cross in Baptism, as offensive to weak brethren. "How long will they be weak?" retorted

James. "Are forty-five years not sufficient for them to grow strong? We do not require subscription of laics and idiots, but preachers and ministers." It was an effective retort enough. Mr. Knewstubs was overwhelmed. But the King's success was limited to the Conference hall; in the country men only marked the discourtesy, and the refusal to yield even a small point. The discussion on the cross branched out into a considerable argument, in which the King, who was in his element, showed to advantage, while the Puritans, who had a bad case, cut a poor figure. Dr. Reynolds brought forward the familiar precedent of Hezekiah's destruction of the brazen serpent. The cross, abused in its turn idolatrously, should in like manner be abolished. The King replied with the argument that the abuse of anything does not destroy the lawful use.

"'For my part,' he said, 'I know not how to answer the objection of the papists, when they charge us with novelties, but truly to tell them, that their abuses are new, but the things which they abused we retain in their primitive use, and forsake only the novel corruption. By this argument we might renounce the Trinity, and all that is holy, because it was abused in Popery; and' (speaking to Dr. Reynolds merrily) 'they used to wear hose and shoes in Popery, therefore you shall now go barefoot.'"

Again the King was unanswerable; but his success carried little conviction to men who, however absurdly they expressed their belief, were sure that the arch-enemy of English liberty was Popery, and who, we must add, at the time had good cause for their belief. After the cross came the surplice. "'It was a relic of heathenism,' said the doctors, 'a kind of garment which the priests of Isis used to wear.' 'Surely,' saith his Majesty, 'till of late I did not think that it had been borrowed from the Heathen, because it is commonly termed a Rag of Popery.'" The formula in the Marriage Service, "With my body I thee worship," the ring in marriage, the Churching of Women, were, in similar manner, mentioned and justified. The Conference had degenerated into a duel between the King and the ministers, fought out before the partial concourse of peers and prelates. James surrendered himself to the excitement and exultation of his controversial victory, and no longer

regarded the limits of prudence or fair play. When Dr. Reynolds pleaded for the restoration of the prophesyings and the creation of an efficient, graduated system of ecclesiastical appeals from the rural deanery to the Episcopal Synod, he listened with impatience, and finally burst out in language of unkingly vehemence—

"'Then Jack, and Tom, and Will, and Dick shall meet, and at their pleasures censure me and my Council, and all our proceedings; then Will shall stand up and say, "It must be thus"; then Dick shall reply, and say, "Nay, marry, but we will have it thus." And, therefore, here I must reiterate my former speech, *Le Roi s'avisera.* Stay, I pray you, for one seven years, before ye demand that of me; and if then you find me pursy and fat, and my windpipes stuffed, I will perhaps hearken to you; for let that government be once up, I am sure I shall be kept in breath; then shall we all of us have work enough, both our hands full. But, Dr. Reynolds, till you find that I grow lazy, let that alone.'"

Mention had been made in the discussion of the royal supremacy; James now, in his irritation against his controversial opponents, took up the point.

"'Dr. Reynolds,' he said, 'you have often spoken for my supremacy; and it is well: but know you any here, or any elsewhere, who like of the present government ecclesiastical, that find fault, or dislike my supremacy?' Dr. Reynolds said, 'No.' 'Why, then,' said his Majesty, 'I will tell you a tale. After that the religion restored by King Edward the Sixth was soon overthrown by the succession of Queen Mary here in England, we in Scotland felt the effect of it. Whereupon Mr. Knox writes to the Queen Regent (of whom, without flattery, I may say, that she was a vertuous aud moderate lady), telling her, that she was supreme head of the Church; and charged her as she would answer it before God's tribunal, to take care of Christ's Evangel, and of suppressing the popish prelates, who withstood the same. But how long, trow ye, did this continue? Even so long, till by her authority the Popish bishops were repressed, he himself, and his adherents, were brought in and well settled, and by these means made strong enough to undertake the matters of reformation themselves. Then lo, they began to make small account of her

supremacy, nor would longer rest on her authority, but took the cause into their own hand, and, according to that more light wherewith they were illuminated, made a further reformation of religion. How they used that poor lady, my mother, is not unknown, and with grief I may remember it; who, because she had not been otherwise instructed, did desire only a private Chapel, wherein to serve God after her manner, with some few selected persons; but her supremacy was not sufficient to obtain it at their hands; and how they dealt with me in my minority, you all know; it was not done secretly: and tho' I would I cannot conceal it. I will apply it thus.' And then putting his hand to his hat, his Majesty said, 'My lords the Bishops, I may thank you that these men do thus plead for my supremacy. They think they cannot make good their party against you but by appealing unto it, as if you, or some that adhere unto you, were not well affected towards it. But if once you were out, and they in place, I know what would become of my supremacy. No Bishop, no King, as before I said. Neither do I thus speak at random without ground; for I have observed since my coming into England, that some preachers before me can be content to pray for James, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith; but as for Supreme Governor in all causes and over all persons (as well ecclesiastical as civil), they pass that over with silence; and what cut they have been of, I after learned.'"

The King brought this astonishing outburst to an end by asking whether the ministers had anything more to object, to which they naturally answered in the negative. His last words were a threat of persecution. "'If this be all,' he said, as he rose to retire, 'that they have to say, I shall make them conform themselves, or I will harry them out of this land, or else do worse.'" Barlow assures us that the King's behaviour filled the peers and prelates with unbounded admiration. One of them said he was fully persuaded his Majesty spake by the instinct of the Spirit of God. Lord Cecil thanked God for so wise a monarch; and the Lord Chancellor, as he passed out of the chamber, observed to Barlow that he had often read that *Rex est mixta persona cum sacerdote*, but he had never seen the truth thereof until that day.

So ended, amidst the plaudits of a servile hierarchy, the worst day's work that ever any monarch did for his own dynasty. James had purchased his controversial victory at a ruinous price, which would have to be paid, before many years had passed, by his hapless successor.

On Wednesday, 18th January, the Conference reassembled for its final meeting. The Archbishop presented a list of the alterations in the Prayer-Book which had been agreed upon in the previous discussions. They were not many or serious. An explanatory phrase here and there, the prohibition of lay ministers of baptism, a partial disuse of the Apocrypha — that was all. To offer the Puritans such changes as a satisfaction of their complaints was to add insult to injury.

Such as they were, the four ministers accepted them with gratitude, and the Conference proceeded to discuss the methods of the High Commission. The King again distinguished himself by an energetic defence of the *ex-officio* oath, which Lord Bacon had denounced as a manifest invasion of the liberties of Englishmen.[1] Again the prelates were full of admiration.

"The Archbishop of Canterbury said that undoubtedly his Majesty spake by the special assistance of God's Spirit. The Bishop of London upon his knee protested, that his heart melted within him (as so, he doubted not, did the

[1] Montague's account is the following: "The third day, which was Wednesday, the King assembled all the Bishops (the Lords of the Council only being present), and took order how to have these things executed which he had concluded; that it might not be (as the King said) as smoke out of a tunnel, but substantially done to remain for ever. So they were debated to whom they might most fitly be referred, and by them made fit to be hereafter enacted by Parliament; so all the Bishops and all the Council have their parts given unto them. This being done, the Ministers were called in, Dr. Reynolds and the rest, and acquainted with what the King had concluded on. *They were all exceedingly well satisfied, but only moved one thing: That those ministers who were grave men and obedient unto the laws, and long had been exempted from the use of the ceremonies, might not upon the sudden be obliged unto them, but have some time given them to resolve themselves in using or not using them.* The King answered, his end being peace, his meaning was not that any man should be cruel in imposing those matters, but by time and moderation win all men unto them; those they found peaceable, to give some connivency to such, and to use their brethren, as he had used them, with meekness and gentleness, and do all things to the edification of God and His Church. So they ended these matters till the Parliament, and then these matters shall be enacted."

hearts of the whole company) with joy, and made haste to acknowledge unto Almighty God the singular mercy we have received at his hands, in giving us such a King, as, since Christ's time, the like, he thought, had not been; whereunto the lords with one voice did yield a very affectionate acclamation. The civilians present confessed, that they could not in many hours' warning have so judicially, plainly, and accurately, and in such a brief described it."

The ministers pleaded for some indulgence in the matters of the vestments and ceremonies in the case of the ministers in Lancashire and Suffolk, and the King seemed disposed to yield, but again the Bishop of London intervened to hinder any concession to Puritanism; and indulgence was limited in the one district and roughly refused in the other. The last word in the Conference was the Bishop's.

"My Lord of London ended all, in the name of the whole company, with a thanksgiving unto God for his Majesty, and a prayer for the health and prosperity of his Highness, our gracious Queen, the young prince, and all their royal issue."

Fuller states that Barlow's account, which is the only detailed and connected narrative of the Conference which has come down to us, was objected against by the Puritans as an unfair presentment of the facts. It must be admitted that the ministers had very little to say for themselves;[1] that the King unquestionably had the best of the argument; and that the Puritan case was distinctly weakened by the manner in which it was set out. We cannot doubt that Barlow was a thoroughgoing partisan, but the course of the proceedings was too much to his taste to necessitate any serious manipulation of the facts, and the account he gives carries the stamp of truth on its face. Probably he suppressed rather than altered or added to his materials. On the opening day, when the King had not yielded to the seduction of successful controversy, but seemed bent on playing an honest and independent part, there is evidence that he spoke with considerable energy on the abuses of the Church, and greatly alarmed the prelates. Andrewes,

[1] Montague also notices the weakness of the Puritans: "And truly the Doctors argued but weakly against them (*i.e.* the ceremonies), so that all wondered they had no more to say against them."

then Dean of Westminster, is reported to have said that "for five hours his Majesty did wonderfully play the Puritan."

Mr. Patrick Galloway, minister of Perth, who had accompanied the King into England, and was present at the Conference, wrote an account of the proceedings to the Presbytery of Edinburgh which confirms this report.[1] He represents the King as controverting the Episcopal assurances that all was well, "in great fervencie."

"The bishops," he says, "upon their knees, with great earnestnesse, craved that nothing sould be altered, least the Popish recusants punished by penall statuts for their disobedience, and the Puritan punished by deprivatioun from calling and living, for nonconformitie, sould say, they had just caus to insult upon them, as men who had travelled to bind them to that which, by their owne mouths, now was confessed to be erroneous. Alwise, after five houres dispute had by his Majestie against them, and his Majestie's resolutioun for reformatioun intimated to them, they were dismissed that day."

Barlow was himself present on that first day, but it is evident, from Galloway's statement, that the prelates were anxious to conceal the outspoken censures of the King. On the other hand, it is clear that Galloway thought meanly of the performance of the ministers. He says that they answered "verie louslie and coldlie."

Calderwood states that when Galloway's letter was read to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Mr. James Melvill, the leading minister in Scotland, rising amid general silence, moved two resolutions, the one of condolence with the Puritans, the other of vigilance in Scotland, "that no perrell or contagioun come from our neighbours' kirk." In England the result of the Conference was not immediately apparent. For the moment the victory of the Bishops seemed complete. The force of the Crown would still, as heretofore, be at their disposal. The discovery of the King's religious preferences had no small influence on the numerous class to whom Puritanism was less a matter of conscience than of desire.

"Henceforward," says Fuller, "many cripples in con-

[1] Calderwood, *Historie of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol. vi. p. 241.

formity were cured of their former halting therein; and such who knew not their own till they knew the King's mind in this matter, for the future quietly digested the ceremonies of the Church."

The Bishops were not slow to follow up their victory. The old Archbishop of Canterbury, Whitgift, died within a few weeks of the Conference, and the leadership of the Church passed wholly into the hand of Bishop Bancroft, the bitterest enemy of the Puritans, whose zeal for the Church had disdained to respect either the decencies of discussion or the dictates of equity. He passed from the Conference, where he had trampled on his opponents, to the Convocation, where he organised and stereotyped the fruits of victory. The primacy being vacant, he presided as Bishop of London, and carried through the famous canons, which still remain the law of the Church of England. These canons destroyed the last hopes of the Puritans. They were so framed as to leave no loophole for evasion, and for every disobedience they prescribed the extreme penalty of excommunication. To hold that there was anything superstitious in the Prayer-Book (Can. 4), or erroneous in the Thirty-nine Articles (Can. 5), was to be *ipso facto* excommunicated. These rules could have no other object than to drive the Puritans out of the Church; but other canons severely prohibited separation. It was sufficiently clear that the petulant exclamation of the King described the deliberate policy of the hierarchy. The Puritans were to be harried out of the land. But would the canons be enforced? All doubt on that point vanished when Bancroft was chosen to succeed Whitgift in the primacy. He was then sixty years old, and for the best part of his life he had waged war with Puritanism. His famous sermon at St. Paul's Cross on 9th February 1589, marks an epoch in the history of the English Church. On that occasion he had asserted with uncompromising distinctness the Divine Right of Episcopacy. Presbyterianism was not merely an inferior and illegal form of Church government; it was contrary to the ordinance of Christ, an intrinsically evil thing. Now, whatever may be the merits of such a view, it seems to be certain that it was novel doctrine in the Reformed Church of England. Hitherto English Churchmen

had associated on equal terms with other Protestants. They had never dreamed of disputing the validity of the foreign Ordinations. Henceforward, under the influence of Bancroft and the Churchmen of his school, the Church of England would deliberately choose and jealously maintain a position of ecclesiastical isolation. Bancroft had thrown himself with zeal into the warfare against Puritanism. He ferreted out the printers of the Marprelate Tracts, and directed their prosecution before the Star Chamber. He was credited with the disgraceful notion of answering those scurrilous attacks on the hierarchy by tracts written in the same scurrilous vein. As chaplain to Archbishop Whitgift, he had taken a leading part in the proceedings against Barrow, Cartwright, and other Puritans of consequence. In 1593 he had published two notable works against the Puritans. In the one, *A Survey of the pretended Holy Discipline*, he vigorously criticised their ecclesiastical views; in the other, *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings published and practised within the Island of Britain under Pretence of Reformation*, he stamped on his opponents the character of sedition and treason. His behaviour at the Hampton Court Conference sufficiently indicates the strength of his prejudices and the infirmities of his temper. The six years of his primacy were devoted to the suppression of Puritanism. Almost his first act was to issue a circular to the Bishops, requiring them to enforce the canons. It is calculated that about three hundred of the clergy were ejected for refusing to comply with the demands made upon them.

What, it may be asked, was the ultimate effect of the triumph of militant Anglicanism at the accession of the Stuart dynasty? We may, perhaps, answer that it definitely secured the distinctiveness of the English Church on the one hand, and drove the Puritans into a close alliance with the democratic element in the constitution on the other. Protestantism would henceforward become in England identified with ecclesiastical disaffection and organised Dissent. The National Church would harden its attitude and sharply define its boundaries. The historic Catholic elements in the Reformed Church would be emphasised, insisted upon, and developed. The temper of ecclesiastical self-assertion would

grow at the expense of religious unity and political strength. But there would be substantial compensations. Puritanism had no intellectual promise. The history of Christianity had neither interest nor value in the eyes of men who repudiated the authority of the Fathers, and laid down the principle that "whatever is not contained in the Word is burdensome to the conscience of Christians, who are set at liberty by Christ." Puritanism, moreover, trampled on the æsthetic sense. There was sentence of death on religious art involved in their contention that "whatsoever is brought into the service of God by the authority of human tradition, and not by the Word of God, ought to be rejected." While, therefore, we condemn the principal actors in the Hampton Court Conference, and lament the unnecessary violences which their short-sighted bigotry entailed on the Church, we cannot regret the defeat of Puritanism.

For the moment the hierarchy was supreme in dependence on the King. The Church had definitely linked her cause to the monarchy. The Puritans betook themselves to the Parliament. Shrewd observers even then discerned the formidable possibilities of the House of Commons. Few could suspect that within less than fifty years the monarchy would have fallen, and dragged the Church down in its fall. Or ought we to reverse the sentence, and say that the Church dragged down the monarchy? Certainly it is significant that the royal saint of Anglicanism was also the victim of his exasperated subjects. The association of Puritanism with democratic politics has become traditional. Dissent is a political force. The "Nonconformist conscience" is a factor in current politics. The explanation must be sought in the circumstances under which Puritanism was violently thrust out of the national ecclesiastical organisation, which it threatened to subvert. King James and Bishop Bancroft were unconsciously the founders of political Dissent, as truly as the nursing fathers of the Anglican Church. May we not say that in both characters they ministered, with whatever personal unworthiness, to the strength and richness of the national life?

OUR UNHAPPY DIVISIONS—A PLEA FOR THE RECOGNITION OF NON-EPISCOPAL CHURCHES

It would be an easy task to collect from current religious literature many striking and eloquent demonstrations of the calamity and scandal occasioned by "our unhappy divisions." Bacon's assertion, that "nothing doth so much keep men out of the Church and drive men out of the Church as breach of unity,"[1] is now universally admitted. In every section of the Christian Society men's minds are exercised on the subject; in all directions a great discontent with existing separations is showing itself, and the desire to recover some effective ecclesiastical unity has laid strong hold on the Christian conscience. The practical urgency of combining religious men in the crusade against the disintegrating and demoralising forces of modern civilisation is becoming apparent to the most conservative of denominationalists. In front of a task the magnitude and difficulty of which are daily increasing, the best Christians in all the Churches regard with an impatience which grows quickly into disgust the miserable waste of spiritual energy, and the lamentable loss of spiritual prestige, caused by divisions which seem equally unnecessary, irrational, and perverse. An eminent Congregational divine has well expressed the prevailing sentiment—

"We are as tired of unqualified competition in religion as in trade; we are sick of class Churches—Methodism for the poor, Congregationalism and Presbyterianism for the middle classes, the Church of England for the aristocracy. There is an honest desire in all the denominations to bring the reality and blessedness of Christian fellowship to the whole people."[2]

[1] *Essays*, ed. Reynolds, p. 19.

[2] *Evolution of English Congregationalism*, by Alex. Mackennal, D.D., 1901, p. 249.

It is indeed the case that denominational loyalty remains a powerful factor, but underneath the old dividing names a new unanimity is growing, which tends to deprive of meaning and practical use the established denominational organisations. Within the sphere of religious politics, as in that of secular, the question is debated whether the time-honoured divisions have not lost their *raison d'être;* whether a wider patriotism, answering to the demands of an imperial citizenship, does not require a fusion, or at least an effective combination, of all good citizens. Perhaps it is inevitable that there should intervene between our perception of the mischiefs of division and our practical agreement a period of transition, in which denominational shibboleths will be current with ever waning sincerity in their use, and denominational claims will be pressed with an ever waxing suspicion that they are not really legitimate. Whether this be the case or not, I do not think any close observer of current Christianity can deny that the level of sincerity is unfortunately low in the denominations, and that their ardour of fraternity is more in word than in deed.

For, however convenient it may be to conceal or ignore the fact, it is certainly the case that the theory of the National Church, which is now in the ascendant, prohibits intercommunion with non-Episcopal bodies, to which, indeed, it denies the name and attributes of Churches. Nonconformists are held to be schismatics; non-Episcopal Orders are held to be no Orders; and the Holy Communion administered in the non-Episcopal Churches is held to be irregular and perhaps invalid. The prevailing Anglican doctrine on these matters has retrograded to the intolerance which was paramount at the end of Queen Anne's reign; and, none the less, the fashion of the hour is to refer to Nonconformists in terms of respect and even affection. This is an unwholesome and demoralising situation. Fraternal language cannot remain without some practical expression. It is not consistent with self-respect to exchange compliments and congratulations with fellow-Christians whom, none the less, you repel from Communion, and officially regard as schismatics. Now the inevitable expression of Christian fraternity is the common reception of the Lord's Supper. It was so in the Apostolic age; it has remained so ever since.

At present courteous language and obliging manners are concealing a situation which tends to become painfully hypocritical. I conceive that religion can dispense with compliment; and the less fine sentiment the better in the absence of charity.

Why cannot the communicant members of the non-Episcopal Churches communicate in the Church of England? The formal barrier is provided by the rigid interpretation of a single Rubric; the real barrier is the doctrine of Apostolic Succession as taught by the Tractarians, and now paramount in the National Church.

I

The excluding Rubric is at the end of the "Order of Confirmation," and runs thus: "And there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed." The last clause was added in 1661, and was vainly excepted against by the Puritans. Their objection was less against the Episcopal ministry of Confirmation than against the inadequate security provided by the ordinance as then administered for due preparation of communicants. "We desire," they wrote in their "Rejoinder," "that the credible approved profession of faith and repentance be made necessaries, but not that all the thousands in England that never yet came under the Bishop's hands (as not one of many ever did, even when they were at the highest) may be kept from the Lord's Supper; for some cannot have that imposition, and others will not, that yet are fit for communion with the Church."[1] Only three years before the Savoy Conference, Baxter published a treatise, which bears this significant title—"Confirmation and Restauration the necessary means of Reformation and Reconciliation; for the healing of the corruptions and divisions of the Churches." In his preface he dwells on the fact that this "medicine" is "owned in whole by the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Erastian, and in half by the Anabaptists." The

[1] *Vid. Documents relating to the Act of Uniformity*, 1662, p. 332.

defect which serious folk found with Episcopal Confirmation was its inadequacy for the purpose for which they supposed the Ordinance to exist. Baxter's account of his own Confirmation by Bishop Morton goes far to justify the Puritan objection. It also confirms what much evidence indicates, that then, as in earlier and later times, the mass of the population was unconfirmed.

"In the bishops' days, some few of them were confirmed; in the country where I lived, about one in ten or twenty, and what that was, and how it was done, I can tell you by what I once made trial of. When I was a schoolboy, about fifteen years of age, the bishop coming into the county, many went to him to be confirmed; we that were boys ran out to see the bishop among the rest, not knowing anything of the meaning of the business. When we came thither, we met about thirty or forty in all, of our own stature and temper, that had come for to be *bishopped*, as then it was called; the bishop examined us not at all in one article of the faith; but in a churchyard in haste we were set in a rank, and he passed hastily over us, laying his hands on our head, and saying a few words, which neither I nor any that I spoke with understood; so hastily were they uttered, and a very short prayer recited, and there was an end. But whether we were Christians or infidels, or knew so much as that there was a God, the bishop little knew, nor inquired. And yet he was esteemed one of the best bishops in England."[1]

So long as the Caroline Settlement lasted, Confirmation could not be insisted on as the invariable preliminary to Communion, for the very sufficient reason that Communion was an act transacted in the parish obligatory on the adult parishioners as such, and enforced by penalties, whereas Confirmation was limited to that comparatively small number on whom the Bishops in their occasional processes through their huge dioceses laid their hands. The Toleration Act changed the religious aspect of the country; but though the legal recognition of Noncomformists was certainly demanded by the best reason and conscience of the time, yet there were many misgivings as to the political consequences of ecclesiastical divisions. Obvious religious considerations united

[1] *Vid. Works*, ed. Orme, vol. xiv. p. 481.

with the suggestions of statesmanship to propose schemes of comprehension by which the National Church should recover the character, which by argument and coercion it had failed to retain, and become again coextensive with the national Christianity. "Occasional conformity" of unconfirmed Nonconformists was welcomed as tending generally to a tolerant temper, and possibly leading the way to complete membership. It served a political purpose by bringing into the public service a number of excellent persons, attached in a special degree to the Revolution Settlement. The brief Tory reaction at the end of Queen Anne's reign revealed the bitter dislike with which the extreme High Churchmen regarded the Dissenters, but could not arrest the tendency of opinion. The accession of the Hanoverian dynasty inaugurated a period of ecclesiastical stagnation, which, however unfavourable to spiritual activity, was marked by a salutary abatement of religious fanaticism. The spiritual revival, which began in the middle of the eighteenth century, reached its climax at the beginning, and had spent itself before the middle, of the nineteenth century, took from the first a direction hostile to hierarchial Christianity. In fact, it was not until the Oxford Movement had become the dominant influence within the National Church that the necessity of Episcopal Confirmation as a preliminary to Communion was generally maintained. The question was raised in an acute form when Dean Stanley invited the Revisers of the New Testament to receive the Holy Communion in Westminster Abbey on 22nd June 1870;[1] but it is doubtful whether any serious objection would have been taken to his action if the communicants on that occasion had not included an avowed and aggressive Unitarian. A formidable agitation, marked by much extravagant and uncharitable language, broke out. The late Canon Carter transmitted to Archbishop Tait a Memorial signed by 1529 clergymen, in which they expressly referred to the Rubric attached to the Confirmation Service as designed to guard against the admission of Nonconformists to Holy Communion. The Archbishop, in acknowledging this Memorial, expressed his dissent from this view—

"As at present advised, I believe this Rubric to apply

[1] *Vid. Archbishop Tait's Life*, by Davidson and Benham, vol. ii. p. 63 f.

solely to our own people, and not to those members of foreign or dissenting bodies who occasionally conform. All who have studied the history of our Church, and especially the reign of Queen Anne, when this question was earnestly debated, must know how it has been contended that the Church of England places no bar against occasional conformity."

I submit that this view is historically sound, and that its authoritative declaration and application in practice are urgently required in the religious interest of the nation. Archbishop Wake, writing in 1718 with reference to the abortive attempt to establish friendly relations with the Gallican Church, used language which *mutatis mutandis* is eminently relevant to the present state of religion in England—

"The surest way will be, to begin as well, and to go as far as we can, in settling a friendly correspondence one with another; to agree to own each other as true brethren and members of the Catholic Christian Church; to agree to communicate in everything we can with one another (which on their side is very easy, there being nothing in our offices, in any degree, contrary to their own principles); and would they purge out of theirs what is contrary to ours, we might join in the public service with them, and yet leave one another in the free liberty of believing transubstantiation or not, so long as we did not require anything to be done by either in pursuance of that opinion. *The Lutherans do this very thing; many of them communicate not only in prayers, but in the communion with us;* and we never inquire whether they believe consubstantiation, or even pay any worship to Christ as present with the elements, so long as their outward actions are the same with our own, and they give no offence to any with their opinions."[1]

It will be remembered that the late Bishop of London publicly expressed his wish that Lutheran communicants, visiting this country, should be admitted to Communion in the English Church. The Rubric in the Prayer-Book ought not to be regarded as asserting a principle of universal application, namely, the necessity of Episcopal Confirmation as the

[1] *Vid.* Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, edited by Soames, vol. iv. p. 530.

preliminary to the reception of the Holy Communion, but as the domestic rule of the Church of England, to which its members must conform as the condition of being admitted to the full privileges of members. Every Church which allows infant baptism must have some means of securing that the baptized are morally and intellectually qualified for Holy Communion, otherwise there would be no escaping from what Baxter described as—

"This fundamental falsehood that infant baptism, upon the parents' profession, doth give them right to the Church-state and privileges of the adult, without any personal profession and covenanting with God, when they come to the use of reason, which the Church must have cognisance of."[1]

Confirmation by the Bishop, following upon such instruction as the parish priest elects to give, provides all the security we have in the Church of England. Non-Episcopal Confirmation among the Greeks and Lutherans, other ceremonies designed with similar views and involving more or less careful preparation among the Presbyterians and Nonconformists, serve the same ends. Under due disciplinary safeguards, provided by suitable authority with reference to circumstances, I would urge the admission of communicants from the orthodox, ordered non-Episcopal Churches to Communion in the National Church.

It has indeed been pointed out to me that there is no means of preventing such Communion now, since it is the generous practice of the Church of England to admit to the Sacrament all who present themselves, throwing the entire responsibility of approaching the Lord's Table on those who do so, asking no questions and interposing no difficulties. This is certainly the case; but the Church of England has a very stern doctrine of the guilt of unworthy Communion, and, as we have seen, the literal and accepted understanding of the Rubric prohibits the Communion of the unconfirmed. The result is that, speaking generally, the more religious and sensitive Nonconformists either refrain from presenting themselves, or state their circumstances in advance to the clergy and are advised not to come, the less desirable and con-

[1] *Vid. Works*, ed. Orme, vol. xiv. p. 482.

scientious do not scruple to avail themselves of our laxity. It is difficult to defend such a system as this, although I confess to an extraordinary reluctance to abridge the existing liberty of unquestioned approach. But, in any case, I am sure that by recognising as we ought to recognise the right of the communicants of the non-Episcopal Churches to communicate at English altars, we should provide the basis for some restoration of discipline, when that great matter shall be taken in hand. We have to choose between intercommunion based on negotiation with the non-Episcopal Churches which implies their recognition, and an implicit repudiation of their ecclesiastical character which renders us wholly defenceless against the profanation of unworthy communicants.

II

I have said that the Rubric was only the formal barrier to that intercommunion with the members of the non-Episcopal Churches to which the real obstacle was the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, as held and taught by the Tractarians and now paramount in the National Church. It is to this difficulty that we must now address ourselves. In sermons before the University of Cambridge and in Westminster Abbey, I have recently asserted in the clearest language my own conviction that the time has now come for the frank recognition by English Churchmen of the non-Episcopal ministries. Here again the proposition really implies rather the recovery of a liberty which has been lost than the winning of any novel franchise. The complete isolation of the English Church is a very modern circumstance of its life. No candid student of our ecclesiastical annals can doubt that the necessity of Episcopal consecration was an open question among Anglicans until the Restoration Settlement enshrined in our Church system the polemical bitterness of a revolutionary epoch. Baxter was justified by the facts when he drew a sharp distinction between "our brethren of the new Prelatical Way" and "those of the ancient Prelacy."[1] He

[1] *Vid. Works*, ed. Orme, vol. xiv. p. 171 f.

describes the intolerant doctrine of the former in terms which are a literally accurate description of the now prevailing Anglican doctrine—

"It is the judgment of these men that I now speak of, that a Prelate is essential to a Church, and there is no Church without them; and that their ordination is of necessity to the essence of a Presbyter, and that those that are ordained without them (though some will except a case of necessity) are not Ministers of Christ. Hereupon they conclude that our congregations here in England are no true Churches, except where the Presbyter dependeth on some Prelate, and the Ministers ordained by Presbyters only are no true Ministers; and they will not allow men to hear them or communicate with them, but withdraw from our congregations like Separatists or Recusants. And the same note many of them brand upon all the Reformed Churches abroad, that have no Prelates, as they do on us, so that the Church of Rome is admirably gratified by it."

It is certain that under the Subscription Act of 1571 (13 Eliz. cap. 12) non-episcopally ordained clergy were permitted to preach and even hold benefices in this English Church. In the famous case of William Whittingham, Dean of Durham, whose Genevan Orders were objected against as invalid, the Earl of Huntingdon, one of the three Commissioners appointed to examine the complaint, did undoubtedly express the general sense of English Churchmen when he disallowed the objection on the ground that—

"It could not but be ill-taken of all the godly-learned both at home and in all the Reformed Churches abroad, that we shall allow of the popish massing priests in our ministry, and disallow of the ministers made in a Reformed Church."[1]

The famous Huguenot scholar, Casaubon, held preferment in the English Church, was the familiar friend of the leading English Bishops, and on his deathbed received the Holy Communion from the hands of Bishop Andrewes.[2] Casaubon's biographer is within the facts when he says that "before the rise of the Laudian School, the English Church and the Re-

[1] *Vid. Dict. of Nat. Biog.* vol. lxi. p. 153.
[2] *Vid.* Mark Pattison's *Isaac Casaubon*, pp. 472, 473.

formed Churches of the Continent mutually recognised each other as sisters." Overall, Bishop of Norwich (1618–1619), appears to have recognised the Presbyterian Orders of Peter de Laune, though he offered to ordain him conditionally.[1] The great Caroline divines were willing to recognise the non-Episcopal Churches as true Churches. Bramhall repudiates the notion that "either all or any considerable part of the Episcopal divines in England do unchurch either all or the most part of the Protestant Churches," and he quotes with approval Bishop Andrewes' well-known "determination"[2] that—

"If our form (of Episcopacy) be of Divine right, it doth not follow from thence that there is no salvation without it, or that a Church cannot consist without it. He is blind who does not see Churches consisting without it; he is hard-hearted who denieth them salvation. We are none of those hard-hearted persons. We put a great difference between these things. There may be something absent in the exterior regiment, which is of Divine right, and yet salvation is to be had."

Bishop Cosin's words in his last will are quite inconsistent with the harsh attitude towards the non-Episcopal Churches which is now generally maintained by Anglicans. Thorndike, one of the most rigid of Caroline clergy, defended the foreign Reformers for their neglect of "the succession of the Apostles because they could not discern it, as they found it blended with such abundance of accessories, especially in the persons of men that hated to be reformed."[3] Elsewhere he boldly advances the far-reaching argument that edification, the *raison d'être* of the Church, demands the creation of a ministry, when the Episcopal ministry could not be had; only he insists rather whimsically that the new Ministry must consist of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.[4] It would be easy to multiply such testimonies from the writings of the Latitudinarians, but I prefer, for obvious reasons, to advance only the opinions of High Churchmen. Andrewes, Overall, Bramhall, Cosin,

[1] *Vid. Dict. of Nat. Biog.* vol. xlii. p. 376.
[2] *Vid. Works*, vol. iii. pp. 517, 518. [Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology.
[3] *Vid. ibid.* vol. i. pt. i. p. 93. [Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology.]
[4] *Vid. ibid.* vol. i. pt. ii. pp. 604, 605.

and Thorndike were as little likely as the highest Anglicans among us to make light of the Episcopal Government, but they were too near the gigantic revolution which rent Western Christendom asunder not to appreciate its character; the force of the counter-Reformation was too great, and the peril it threatened to their faith and freedom was too obvious, to permit them to lose sight of the essential solidarity of the Reformed Churches.

III

I submit that there are cogent and sufficient reasons why the comparatively tolerant doctrine of the older Anglicans should now replace the rigorous exclusiveness of the Tractarians and their successors, and be made the basis of a frank recognition of the non-Episcopal Churches. The last three centuries have taught us much. In secular politics we have finally got rid of the obstinate delusion of Divine right attaching to any specific form of civil government, and this change has coincided with a greatly exalted doctrine of the State. I apprehend that more slowly we are learning a similar lesson with respect to ecclesiastical politics. It was the custom of the older Anglicans to argue freely from the State to the Church. Both were held to be divinely ordained. Christ was the Head of both; and in both His government proceeded on similar lines. Against the Papal claim of universal sovereignty it was very effective to point to the patent fact that the political unity of Christendom had been replaced by autonomous, independent kingdoms. If civil government was patient of many States, why should not spiritual government be equally patient of many Churches? Thus Overall in his curiously interesting *Convocation Book*—

"Our purpose being in this place to resemble and compare the government of the Catholic Church with the universal government of the Son of God over the whole world, we hold it sufficient to observe that every National Church may as well subsist of herself without one universal bishop, as every kingdom may do without one general monarch." [1]

[1] P. 213. [Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology.]

Overall had no conception of any legitimate civil government which was not monarchical; he had no experience of republican institutions. His argument, adapted to our present information, is as cogent against Bishops as against Popes. The "logic of facts" disallows the Divine rights of specific forms of ecclesiastical government; and this conclusion ministers directly to a loftier notion of the spiritual Society itself. Church and State loom larger when their institutions of government shrink into the transitory creatures of their ever-changing circumstances.

Experience, moreover, has added a solemn authentication to the modest doctrine of Episcopacy commonly connected, and probably with justice, with the name of Hooker. The great English denominations have spread throughout the world, and, unless some unimaginable forces reverse the prevailing tendencies, they are destined in the future to take a paramount position in the Reformed Churches. English Churchmen are slow to appreciate the magnitude and rapidity of their progress. Even within this island their growth has greatly exceeded that of the Church of England, and though little more than a century ago the "Dissenting interest" seemed evidently waning, it is probable that at this moment half the professing Christians in the country are Nonconformists. When, however, we look beyond the confines of Great Britain, and consider the religious state of the British Empire and the United States, the importance of non-Episcopal Christianity becomes immediately apparent. The National Church, then, does not now stand over against a few novel and heavily suspected sectaries, but has to define its attitude towards a federation, or quasi-federation of organised and militant Churches, some of which represent a religious energy and a volume of Christian conviction far greater than its own. Numbers, it may be said, are properly irrelevant to truth; the title-deeds of a religious society cannot be its success. But the "Free Churches" are not only numerous and increasing societies; they are mighty evangelistic agencies; they add their full contribution to theological science; they enrich the spiritual life of Christendom with their full proportion of beneficent and saintly lives. Will any candid observer maintain the moral inferiority of non-Episcopal Christians? Let it

be granted that (to borrow Mr. Lecky's words[1]) "Catholicism commonly softens, while Protestantism strengthens, the character," what is that but to affirm two different but equally genuine, and perhaps equally precious, types of Christian character? If it be maintained that these are considerations properly irrelevant to the inquiry whether or not the non-Episcopal Churches are in the full sense of the term, Churches of Christ, then I dissent altogether. As I read the New Testament, the one test which Christ authorised men to apply to His disciples was precisely the test of moral results.

If, then, we are compelled to admit that non-Episcopal ministries are not less spiritually effective than our own, that the Sacraments administered by them are equally with ours the channels of those supernatural graces which create the Christian character, that all the tokens of the Holy Ghost's presence and action are as evident in them as in us, by what right can we continue to exclude them from our frank and affectionate fellowship? By what right do we ignore them in our parishes, refuse them all access to our pulpits, urge the clergy to repudiate their Orders, and facilitate their reordination? We treat them as the Roman Catholics treat us, but with even less excuse. This is the root of bitterness in our religious life, and until it be plucked up there will be no sincerity in our professions of fraternity. The best Nonconformists resent most justly the insult implied in exhortations to reunion, however courteously expressed, which require of them an act of spiritual apostasy. Philip Henry,[2] one of the most placable of Christians, yet found this stumbling-block insurmountable. "He objected to be reordained, and could not, after being a Presbyter for years, declare himself moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon himself the office of Deacon." John Howe, admittedly a gentle and tolerant man, flared up in honourable passion when Seth Ward, the Bishop of Exeter, asked, "Pray, sir, what hurt is there in being *twice* ordained?" "Hurt, my lord," was his indignant rejoinder, "it hurts my understanding; the thought is shocking; it is an absurdity, since nothing can have two beginnings." My

[1] *History of European Morals*, vol. ii. p. 368 (11th edition).

[2] *Vid.* Stoughton's *Religion in England*, vol. iii. pp. 259–261.

friend and colleague, Canon Armitage Robinson, in the powerful and moving sermon [1] which he preached at the consecration of Bishop Ryle on S. Paul's Day, 1901, said most truly of the Methodists that "the chief barrier to reconciliation with the old Church, for which many of them have a deep reverence and a sincere love, is the thought that such reconciliation could only be possible on terms which to them would be a denial of the grace of the ministry to which they owe their souls."

I shall be pointed inexorably to the Preface to the Ordinal, and reminded that the Bishops of the Anglican Communion assembled at Lambeth laid down as one of the bases of Reunion an acceptance of "the Historic Episcopate." But I submit that the time has fully come for us to recognise what I apprehend to be the clear testimony of historic science, that the Episcopate is itself a development from an earlier system, a development very early indeed, so early, perhaps, as to be probably apostolic; but still a development which was triumphant over the whole area of ecclesiastical life only in the course of two or, perhaps, even three centuries. Then I would ask, What is the "Historic Episcopate"? At what stage in the long process by which the presiding presbyter became the Infallible Pontiff is the Episcopate to be stereotyped as a Divine and unalterable institution? If the practice of the Society of the Baptized in the fourth century is to be accepted as representing the "mind of the Spirit," why not that of the same Society in the eleventh, or in the sixteenth, or in the twentieth? The antiquity of the Episcopal government and its great history may be subjects of legitimate satisfaction to the members of an Episcopal Church, may justify a jealous retention of that order, and authorise an exceptional confidence in its practical value, but I wholly fail to see how either the one or the other can form the basis of a Divine Right, and require the condemnation of the non-Episcopal ministries.

I have necessarily spoken only in this article of the principle on which the intercommunion of all Reformed Churches might be established, and the humiliating isolation of the Church of England terminated. There would be need of much

[1] Published in the volume, *Unity in Christ*, p. 295. [Macmillan.]

careful inquiry, of much cautious negotiation, of exact and vigilant discipline, before that principle could receive satisfactory application in practice; but the primary matter is to affirm and secure the principle, and create a public opinion strong enough to bear down the formidable vested interests of denominational exclusiveness. I am convinced that the highest interests of the English people unite to demand the unification of the religious agencies now existing in the country. I am not less certain that Christianity will be immensely strengthened by the removal of the scandal involved in divisions, which we own to be "unhappy," and are discovering to be also unnecessary.

THE END

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